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ABSTRACT

Illustrating components of multi-county organization and emphasizing the rewards of area organization when carefully used as a tool to close the gaps between local, state, and Federal governments, this monograph presents the following five chapters: (1) "Key Factors in Area or Regional Boundry Delineation" (natural physical, biological, and human processes; spatial, social, political, and government organization; economic criteria); (2) "Federal, State, and Local Programs Emphasizing Regions" (dispensing the Federal dollar; coordination of planning/development programs; planning grants; rural areas; economic development areas/districts; resource conservation and development projects; community action programs; state-created or supported multi-county areas; councils of government; privately sponsored development organizations); (3) "Processes, Problems, and Requirements of Regional Organization and Planning"; (4) "Organization and Action Strategies" (degrees of citizen participation; identification with the new area; maximizing effective involvement; formal planning process; a planning process model; the action-planning concept; the role of professional staff as advocates; single-prupose and comprehensive planning; change strategies; resistance to change; living with conflict); (5) "Regional Multi-County Areas as a Tool for Planning and Development". (JC)

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Regional Planning and Development: Organization and Strategies



Montana Agricultural Experiment Station
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REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: ORGANIZATION AND STRATEGIES

by
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and
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In Cooperation With The
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Much of the material in the Introduction and in Chapters I and II is adapted and summarized from a publication in process by Davis McEntire (University of California, Berkeley), Gregory Eckman (formerly a graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley), and William R. Lassey, entitled, MULTI-COUNTY ORGANIZATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A PRELIMINARY REPORT.

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INTRODUCTION*

"Regional," "area" or "multi-county" organization has become one of the principal vehicles for grappling with the social, economic and political problems and opportunities of rural America. Historically, agencies of government and other organizations have operated programs largely on the basis of state, county or community boundaries. Under contemporary conditions counties and communities often seem too small to provide a realistic basis for planning and action programs, while states are too large in many instances for adequate program management. Consequently, a variety of new administrative areas have been created, which transcend the boundaries of traditional units of local organization.

There is increased concern about the obsolescence or inadequacy of many existing organizations and units of government; often they seem unable to deal effectively with current problems and opportunities. The search for new forms of territorial division has been impelled in part by the inadequacies of these existing structures, but equally by pressures exerted from a proliferation of federal programs designed to solve specific problems such as poverty, economic depression, regional planning or water resource development. The boundaries of most existing local organizational units were drawn at a time when social and economic activities were oriented to now obsolete forms of transportation and communication. Failure to adjust boundaries has often resulted in serious deficiencies in administrative

*This introductory section draws heavily from materials prepared by Davis McEntire as part of a preliminary regional report for this project.

effectiveness, increasing costs for many public services, while failing to promote social and economic adaptation.

In the process of searching for new geographic units, numerous proposals have been devised suggesting criteria by which more effective "areas" could be constituted. Most of the criteria presume or imply that: (1) some defined area of geographic space serves as an optimum unit for planning, organization and action to achieve "development," (2) an area focus provides an effective means for accomplishing the coordination of activities needed for development, and (3) an area affords a basis for enlisting public support and citizen participation in organizational and decision processes that will lead to development.¹

As yet, there has been little serious study of existing new units and their effectiveness. Neither has there been much effort to test area development theories expounded by ecologists, geographers, economists, sociologists, political scientists, and various federal agencies. It is uncertain whether political, economic, or social issues should be given largest attention, or whether some combination of these or other forces will produce the most efficient and effective new units.

As a basis for organization, the territorial area or region concept contrasts with the principle of organization by function. Most of the activities of government are organized for the performance of certain functions such as operating military units, building roads, managing forests, giving relief to the needy, supporting farm prices, and so on through a vast array of activities. Specialized staffs

¹"New territorial units," "regions," "multi-county areas," and "development areas" are used as essentially synonymous terms in this report. "Development" is defined as an activity which increases the per capita social or economic well-being of the population in such an area.

are organized, each expert in the performance of the agency function. To achieve coherence and coordination, similar functions are grouped together under a common superior management. The agencies of government tend to be devoted, and are expected to be devoted, to the efficient performance of their respective functions throughout the national or state territory. An agency performing a function over a large territory will usually find it efficient to divide the territory, creating for its administrative purposes regions or districts. But these regions are incidental to the performance of the function. They are not the same as areas which serve or are intended to serve as a framework for organized activity. The latter, in fact, are the opposite of the former. On the one hand concern is with the territorial aspects of organizing for the performance of functions. On the other concern is with the problem of how to organize an area, considering the various functions that need to be performed within the geographical unit. Area organization is used not only for promotion of economic development but also, importantly, for the planning and control of metropolitan areas, for the conservation of localized natural resources such as bodies of water, and for other purposes.

Theories of area organization rest on the basic assumption that the people who inhabit or use a definable geographic locality have certain common needs and interests which arise from sharing a common spatial environment with its particular characteristics. For this reason, such a locality and its population are thought to constitute an appropriate unit for certain kinds of social decision-making and

action. A parallel assumption is that a significant part of the processes and activities taking place within an area constitute a system capable of being managed. These same assumptions are the foundation of local community organization and local government.

Changes in technology and related economic and social changes have profoundly affected the relationships of people to the spatial environment. Improvements in communication and transportation have continually increased the interdependence of all groups and places and favored the growth of large organizations operating over wide territories. Local communities and governments have become less important as many functions once organized locally have been transferred to extra-local organizations, both government and private. Growing interdependence signifies diminishing autonomy of individual units. It is evident that local communities have become increasingly dependent on services supplied by the agencies of "mass society," and controlled from distant headquarters, and to this extent outside agencies have encroached upon the autonomy of single communities.

Chapter I

KEY FACTORS IN AREA OR REGIONAL BOUNDARY DELINEATION*

The significance of "territorial space" and the problem of defining meaningful units of territory are subjects of study from widely varying viewpoints. Here we shall briefly review some of the more salient theories developed in the fields of ecology, geography, economics, sociology, political science, and public administration, which can contribute directly to redefinitions of useful spatial boundaries.

Natural Physical, Biological and Human Processes

Natural and social scientists were led to an interest in territorial areas through the study of relationships between organisms and their environment, a subject which has become increasingly important as we face current population and pollution crises. The ecological environment is conceived as the totality of external influences, organic and inorganic, that impinge upon living things. All forms of life are constantly adjusting to their environment. Organisms must adapt in order to survive. A student of human ecology has suggested, "Life is a synthesis of organism and environment; the two form a partnership so intimate that it can be resolved only in theory."¹

"Community," referring to the population of living things, and "habitat," which is the physical dwelling place of the population, are fundamental concepts in ecology.² Study of the human ecological

*Originally drafted by Davis McEntire and Gregory Eckman, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of California, Berkeley; edited and in part rewritten by William R. Lassey.

¹Footnotes follow the final chapter.

community focuses on the inter-relationships and interdependencies of people existing in a particular territory or environment. The territory and size of population can vary widely depending on the nature of the physical environment, state of development, levels of degradation or pollution, density of population and a wide range of inter-connecting factors.

The concepts of ecology are readily extended to the study of human behavior because man, like all other living creatures, is dependent on the environment, organic and inorganic. With few exceptions, man has tended to dominate other species, and only recently have we begun to realize some of the environmental problems resulting therefrom. This realization is one of the critical bases for redefinitions of how the environment and resources must be treated if man is to survive and prosper.

The interdependence among men has been notably increasing. Factors which increase the degree of interdependence, such as (notably) an increasing division of labor and specialization of tasks, tend to augment the concentration of human settlement in selected locations, such as the coastal areas of the U.S. On the other hand, dependence on various characteristics of land operates as a dispersive force. New technology and knowledge have decreased concentration of people on agricultural land; manufacturing, for example, is usually concentrated in locations where there are certain raw materials. Thus, while human interdependence requires relative proximity, such proximity is limited by the changing uses of land. Improvements in transportation and communication reduce the conflict between concentration and dispersion but contribute to the need for redefinitions of appropriate boundaries for dealing with new problems.

The most significant contribution of ecological science to the study of areas or regions is the concept of functional interdependence among all living things within an ecological community, and between them and the nonliving environment. Ecologists have helped to demonstrate that a specific change in human activity or in land use--such as an increase or decrease in numbers of people, addition of chemicals to a lake or to the air, excavating the soil, or damming a stream--is likely to cause changes in the environment. Hence, a particular environmental change, judged desirable in itself, may, and often does, have unanticipated, noxious consequences, and leads to a need for redefinition of how the territory or environment is to be used.

Spatial Organization

In most geographical analyses each region has a "core area", where the defining characteristics of the region find their clearest and most intense expression, and a "periphery", where the characteristics of the region are increasingly intermingled with extraneous characteristics. In the nodal region, the focal or central point from which lines of circulation flow is most often where the core of the region lies.

In delineating a region, the geographer looks for homogeneity and cohesion in terms of meaningful criteria. Conceivably, an indefinitely large number of regions could be designated by the use of diverse criteria. However, criteria for defining geographic regions are only significant when they serve to illuminate a condition, problem or

phenomenon in earthspace. Thus for many purposes a system of regional divisions is simply a methodological device for discovering and ordering phenomena associated with space.

Social Organization

Among the concerns of sociology is the nature of the relationships existing among people who inhabit a particular area, as well as the influence of physical proximity on the interaction of people. This interest is expressed mainly in numerous studies of communities. The individuals who form a localized cluster of population obviously share the physical features of a certain unit of space. Sociologists want to know what else they have in common, how they are interrelated, and how they differ from and are related to other aggregates of population.

The attention of sociologists has been particularly drawn to the changing significance of local communities. As early as 1927, Kolb and Wileden wrote: "Fundamental changes are taking place in rural group relations; locality no longer holds country people to such restricted social or business contacts . . . neighborhood groups are no longer the important organization units."³

Jehlik and Losey reported from an Indiana study in 1951 that rural neighborhoods had been substantially supplanted as "meaningful areas of social togetherness," and their conclusion was echoed by other studies. Research has documented the decline of business in many villages and small towns, the passing of the "country doctor," the "little red schoolhouse," and the "country church."⁴ More broadly,

Roland Warren describes the "great change" in American communities, which he defines as "the increasing orientation of local community units toward extracommunity systems of which they are a part, with a corresponding decline in community cohesion and autonomy."⁵ These studies have led directly to the present concern for defining new and larger spatial areas as appropriate adjustments to these "great changes."

To analyze change as well as the present status of community life, Warren formulates the concepts of "locality-relevant functions" and "vertical" and "horizontal" community patterns. Locality-relevant functions include those functions which must be performed on the local level, whether the institutions and organizations which perform them are locally controlled or not. The vertical pattern includes those units performing functions on the local level which are parts of systems that transcend the locality. The horizontal pattern refers to the relationships of local units to each other.

An important feature of this scheme is a concept of the community, defined as consisting of functional units which are involved in two kinds of relationships--with similar units external to the community and with dissimilar units within the community. A particular unit (for example, the school) may be, and usually is, involved in both sets of relations, but one set may be more decisive than the other. The community does not act as a whole; only its functional units act. Using this scheme, a community would be relatively autonomous if most of its functional units were controlled at the local level--that is, if the horizontal pattern were dominant. If most of the

functions relevant to the locality were performed by units responsive exclusively to extralocal systems, the community's autonomy would be minimal:

The 'great change' . . . operates to strengthen the vertical ties of community units to extracommunity systems, to make less viable the horizontal ties based on propinquity of community units to each other and to remove from the local community many types of decision about what will take place on the local scene.⁶

Warren observes that the vertical pattern lends itself to formal organization with specialization of functions and unified sources of authority and control.⁷ The horizontal pattern, on the other hand, tends to be informal, diffuse, and less planned. Organizations such as chambers of commerce, community chests, federations of churches, or community development councils represent attempts to relate community units to each other in a planned, systematic way.⁸ These structures, however, have appeared to weaken, while the systems which link local units with their extracommunity "parent" organizations have gained increasing strength.

Sociological theory of community has important implications for the organization of "area" programs of action. In the first place, the transfer of decision-making powers to extracommunity systems does not in itself signify any diminution of the functions that need to be performed in the locality but only implies that the locus of decision regarding such functions has changed. In fact, the contemporary emergence of recognized needs for area development, resource conservation, and protection of the environment may call for new functions and new problem-solving activities at the locality level.

Secondly, the growth of large-scale specialized agencies operating nation-wide, while increasing the efficiency of operations within sectors, has apparently accentuated the difficulties of coping with problems that cut across organizational boundaries. The need is often expressed for mechanisms to coordinate the decisions of specialized agencies at the points of delivery of their services.

A third implication is the need for redefinition of the size and boundaries of the local areas to which "locality-relevant" functions are appropriate. Although "locality" in some sense remains significant, it must be defined according to the ways in which people actually use space under existing technological conditions. To a considerable degree, this redefinition has already been effected through the transfer of commercial functions to larger population centers, the consolidation of school districts, and similar changes. Efforts to create multi-county areas for planning or administrative purposes are following this same trend.

Finally, along with redefinition of meaningful social areas, there is need to create new structures and relationships among the functional units serving the area in order that necessary tasks may be more effectively performed and problems solved. This is equivalent to a redefinition of the functional community.

Economic Criteria

Economists have studied the distribution of various kinds of economic activity, intending to explain the causal factors in patterns of location. Many studies have been made also of the economics of areas,

such as counties, valleys, and large regions, frequently with emphasis on the ability of the area to attract and hold economic enterprises. Attempts to define "economic areas" according to economic criteria are of relatively recent origin and have employed two main approaches.

One approach may be termed a search for homogeneity. It involves an attempt to identify areas which are relatively homogeneous with respect to economic makeup. The most ambitious enterprise of this kind is the U.S. Census Bureau's division of the United States into "state economic areas" which are "homogeneous in their general livelihood and socioeconomic characteristics."⁹

A State Economic Area (SEA) combines counties which are relatively similar on a series of measures including percent of workers employed in manufacturing, level of living index, percent of rural population, type of farming, and other objective criteria. The indices are weighted separately for each area according to their relative importance in the economy or population of the area. The formation of an SEA (as defined in 1961) is subject to four constraints: (1) it must include whole counties, (2) the counties must be contiguous, (3) it must not cross state boundaries, and (4) it must have a population of at least 100,000.¹⁰ Hence, the SEAs are multi-county areas within states. They are further distinguished from metropolitan areas, indeed they are the counterpart of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs), since they include all territory not included in SMSA's.

An alternative approach to delineating economic areas is represented by the concept of "functional economic area." This concept.

implies the existence of an economic system operating within definable areal boundaries--not a total economic system, to be sure, but a significant set of interdependencies, relatively differentiated from other systems.

Residential activities--primarily employment and shopping, are used in defining "functional economic areas." A central city is essential, surrounded by an area lying within commuting range. Under conditions in Iowa for example, this range is set at 50 miles or about one hour's driving time, which "approaches the outer limit of the home-to-work commuting radius for workers employed in the central city," and also approximates the driving time spent for trips for major shopping goods and other purposes. County and state boundaries are ignored.¹¹

The concept of functional economic areas is grounded in the theory of "central place" which holds a prominent position in economic geography.¹² Towns can be ranked according to degree of centrality. Those with a "high order" of centrality offer a wider variety of goods, have more people, serve larger areas, are more diversified economically, and are more widely spaced than "low order" places. The area served by a central place is determined by the "farthest distance a dispersed population is willing to go in order to buy a good offered at a place."¹³ This formulation may be compared with Fox's 1966 statement: "The villages and towns in a functional economic area appear to form a hierarchy of increasingly complex and complete shopping and service centers, with the widest array of goods and services being offered by the central city."¹⁴

An important feature of Fox's analysis of the functional economic area is a statement of certain criteria which an area should meet if it is to be capable of serving as a unit for planning and implementing action programs, especially those which rely heavily on local initiative and community recognition of common interests: (1) the area should have a wide range of residentiary economic activities including professional services, education, and health facilities; (2) it should have a substantial "leadership pool" measured by the number of educated people and of those who have achieved economic success; and (3) it should have direct contacts with the major, nationally oriented centers of industry, finance, trade, corporate management, and influence upon national economic policy. To meet these criteria, according to Fox, the central city ordinarily needs to have a population of 25,000 or more.¹⁵

A good many areas with central cities of 25,000 or more can be readily identified. However, considerable portions of United States territory (particularly in the Plains and Rocky Mountain areas) lie outside commuting range of cities of this size. Further, there are areas characterized by a number of scattered small towns which do not have a recognizable central city of any size.

The Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is experimenting with several methods of delineating economic areas. Using the functional economic area concept but respecting county boundaries, the continental United States has been divided into 285 multi-county economic areas. A second method has been developed that begins with identifying counties that depend

more on economic activity within the county than with any contiguous counties. Termed "core counties," 390 of these were identified. In defining functional areas, non-core counties will be attached to core counties according to degree of economic interdependence. The latter will then be assigned to larger areas or regions to obtain a hierarchy of central places.¹⁶

Political and Government Organization

Political science is concerned with geographic areas as they affect distribution of governmental authority. This problem is of particular interest to specialists in public administration.

Areas defined for governmental purposes have a unique characteristic which sets them apart from other kinds of areas discussed above. Within ecology, geography, sociology, or economics, the area is primarily a conceptual tool used to organize and analyze the phenomena with which the discipline is concerned. As such, the area boundaries are often not clearly defined. Ecologists write of "ecotones," geographers of "shaded peripheries," and economists of "centers" and "hinterlands." Governmental areas, however, are "jurisdictional"--they define the territorial limits within which the powers of some agency of government may be exercised. Hence, the boundaries cannot be vague or uncertain without generating conflict among governments or agencies of government.

Governmental areas, moreover, are always man-made. They often do not grow out of any natural or social process but are established by a decision delineating distinct boundaries. A decision fixing the

boundaries of a governmental area may, but often does not, take account of the criteria that interest other scientific disciplines. From the viewpoint of ecology, for example, to assign one bank of a stream to one area and the opposite bank to another is absurd; yet this often happens in the determination of governmental boundaries.

When dealing with the areal distribution of governmental authority, political scientists distinguish between political areas and administrative areas. Political areas have definite powers while administrative areas may not. Political areas are commonly referred to as units of government while administrative areas are known as instruments of government.

William Anderson describes the essential characteristics of political areas as follows:

A unit of government may be defined as a resident population occupying a defined area that has a legally authorized organization and governing body, a separate legal identity, the power to provide certain public or governmental services, and a substantial degree of autonomy including legal and actual power to raise at least part of its own revenue.¹⁷

Political areas can be further divided into areas of general government and areas of limited or special purpose government. The former consists of the 50 states, 3,049 counties, and roughly 35,150 municipalities and townships in the United States. School districts and special districts constitute approximately 45,000 limited purpose areas.¹⁸

The existing system of political areas in the United States has been much criticized by political scientists, mainly on the grounds that many areas are too small and the system as a whole is unduly

resistant to change. The small size of many political areas is a cause of inefficiency and high cost in the provision of governmental services. The small jurisdictional area often cannot economically or effectively provide the services which citizens have come to expect of government.¹⁹ Furthermore, boundaries of political areas frequently do not fit the shape of problems requiring government action; boundaries of political areas which divide a lake, for instance, make it very difficult to cope with the problems of the lake as a whole.

The small size and inappropriate boundaries of many general government areas have been a cause of abdication of authority to higher levels and larger units of government. Numerous functions performed formerly by cities and counties have been given over to the states, while many state functions have been assumed by the federal government. These transfers of authority to higher levels reflect the frequent inability of local units of government to deal economically and comprehensively with the problems of their political areas.

Functions of general government units have also been transferred to smaller limited purpose governments. The proliferation of special districts is indicative of weaknesses in the organization and effectiveness of general government, including counties, municipalities, and townships.²⁰ This reflects the fact that special purpose political areas are often used to overcome the jurisdictional and geographical limitations of general governmental areas.

However, special or limited purpose governmental areas also have their shortcomings. While the number of school districts has declined due to consolidation, nearly half of all school systems in 1966 still enrolled less than 300 pupils.²¹ The number of special districts continues to grow. They provide an immediate solution to such problems as sewage disposal, fire protection, and water supply. Typically, special districts are unfunctional; in 1964 the vast majority of the over 21,000 special districts performed one, and only one, function.²² This has led to a fragmentation of responsibility and authority at the local level. The general public is often unaware of the existence of such governmental areas, and their officials are therefore not visible nor politically accountable.²³

These analyses help to illuminate the complexity of dividing powers and organizing governmental activities on an areal basis. However, one basic area of agreement appears to be that political units of government must be given the areal dimensions and comprehensiveness needed to deal with existing or potential governmental problems. Fractionalized, small government fails to fully achieve the values of equality, welfare, or liberty. Equality and liberty are often threatened by entrenched controlling groups in the small political units, while welfare values are insufficiently realized because local governments lack the spatial comprehensiveness to deal effectively with area-wide problems.

Unlike political areas, administrative areas are not legally or financially autonomous. They are formed for the convenient execution of governmental functions.

Any administrative agency having other than purely research responsibilities must carry its work from the center where the agency's top officials are located--Washington, the state capitol, the court house, or the town hall--to the people in their homes and places of work.²⁴

Agencies of local, state, or federal government frequently divide and consolidate political areas into administrative areas in order to effectively execute assigned functions. The extent to which administrative areas should follow the boundaries of political areas is a controversial question.

Although the functional requirements of administrative agencies are a primary factor in the delineation of area boundaries, relationships with other agencies and units of government are also to be considered. This is particularly true when the administrative agency must work closely with state or local government.²⁵ A case in point is the Cooperative Extension Service practice of conforming to state and county boundaries. Further, social and economic data are often collected according to the established divisions of general government, and agencies relying on such data tend to define administrative areas accordingly.

The allocation of authority between headquarters and administrative areas raises the problem of balancing the need for uniform administration against the need for adaptability to the particular conditions of local areas. It is often extremely difficult to develop national policies and guidelines which are adaptable in their specific details to local uniquenesses.

Problems of coordinating the various administrative units operating within a territory are receiving increasing attention from practitioners and specialists in public administration.

In recent years, the number of functions and services performed by government have grown dramatically. While each function may be highly desirable on its own merits, it has become increasingly evident that specialization without coordination often leads to confusion and even chaos. But, achievement of coordination of specialized functions at the area level is an extremely complex problem; each agency typically has its own mandate and budget, has to think about coordination of its field services within its own structure, and many different political units (federal, state, county, municipal, schools, and other special districts) are usually operating within the same territory.

One obvious device for facilitating coordination would be the adoption, by all or many agencies, of uniform areas and area headquarters. Obstacles to this solution include the severe rigidity and the frequently arbitrary character of political areas. Of equal relevance is the fact that different agencies often have very different area requirements for the effective performance of their respective functions.

Functional coordination is occasionally attempted by designating an official as common head of a group of agencies (federal, state, or local) to coordinate their activities within a given area. The function of such coordinators has typically been to persuade area officials to meet and discuss their relationships and apparent problems. However, compared to the power of the individual bureaucratic hierarchies, and the drive of the agencies for autonomy, the area coordinators have been in a weak position.²⁶

An alternative approach is to create coordinating committees (composed of various agency representatives) to meet, exchange information, and jointly make recommendations to their constituent agencies. The interagency panels of the Department of Agriculture exemplify this approach on the state and county levels. The coordinating committee device is also used in Economic Development Areas and Resource Conservation and Development Districts. Such committees are often able to achieve a degree of coordination, although they tend to be ineffective in dealing with problems "on which feelings run deep, agency prestige is at stake, and views of public policy diverge."²⁷ Indeed, agencies are usually not bound nor inclined to always follow the decisions of the coordinating committee.

Chapter II

FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAMS EMPHASIZING REGIONS*

The federal government has taken a leading role in promoting the organization of programs for selected areas or regions. The Tennessee Valley Authority and the Columbia Basin Project, initiated in the 1930's, are well known examples. More recently, economic development areas, districts, and regions have been created under policies of the Economic Development Administration (EDA); Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) projects sponsored by the Department of Agriculture, Planning Areas fostered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Appalachian Regional Commission, and many other new areas have been designated.

A message of President Johnson to Congress in March, 1967, titled "Quality of American Government," stated official thinking on the subject at that time.

In shaping programs to meet the needs of modern day America, several factors have emerged which have important consequences for our federal system:

FIRST, many of the problems we are dealing with are national in scope, requiring national strategies to attack them. But these problems exist in communities and neighborhoods, so their solutions must be tailored to specific local needs

SECOND, attacking the major ills of our society--poverty, crime, pollution, and decay--requires the interaction of many agencies working together at different levels of government. . . .

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THIRD, many of the problems transcend established boundaries. Air and water pollution, for example, respect no state or municipal lines Many of our programs therefore have resulted in new groupings and councils of old jurisdictions working together for the first time.

Careful study of these key factors reveals the need to strengthen the federal system through greater communication, consolidation, consistency, and coordination.¹

The three main points in the late President Johnson's message deserve underlining because they are reflected in all the contemporary federal approaches to the problems of area development. First, "solutions must be tailored to specific local needs," meaning that local programs must be designed--programs that are related to national problems and strategies, but which remain locally oriented. Second, the "interaction of many agencies working together at different levels of government" clearly refers to the relations of federal, state, and local governments, going far beyond the problems of coordination among federal agencies. The President's third point is an explicit recognition of the inadequacies of the boundaries of many existing governmental units, and the need for new kinds of areas--"new groupings and councils of old jurisdictions."

Any effort to move from administrative coordination within an area, to cooperation among different levels of government, encounters political problems. Relations among federal agencies can be resolved ultimately by referral to their common head. But this solution is not available for relations among governments which have independent Constitutional authority and differential access to the electorate. Relations among governments have to be adjusted by redistribution of authority (as occurs in interstate compacts, or school district

and county consolidation), or by a process of bargaining (or both). In any case, a program designed for an area must take account of the fact that municipalities, counties, and state governments operating in the area, as well as the federal government, have independent power. To create a new form of government for an area (for example, a regional government for a metropolitan area) may appeal on rational grounds, but existing political units are seldom easily pushed aside.

Intermediate between administrative coordination and area organization are the Rural Development Committees (RDC's) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.² These are essentially councils of the component bureaus of the Department. They operate on state, county, and district levels, and are intended as a means of voluntarily coordinating the activities of the Agricultural agencies, but they also have the specific purpose of promoting rural development in their respective areas. This is achieved by considering area needs and problems during council meetings and searching out the relevant resources within, or sometimes outside, the participating agricultural agencies. They also prepare and distribute information on the various kinds of federal aid available to non-metropolitan communities and individuals.

Dispensing the Federal Dollar

The principal means by which the federal government enters into local programs and interaction with state and local governments is through grants-in-aid to state and local governments. In 1971 this amounted to an estimated \$30.3 million.³ Federal financing permits

many activities which otherwise could not be undertaken. The power of the purse, moreover, is the federal government's main resource in bargaining with state and local governments about the nature of programs to be undertaken. Federal agencies with money to dispense are, thus, in a position of great influence. Moreover, the purposes for which federal grants are offered, and the conditions to be attached, often raise issues of a highly political character which frequently find expression in Congress. Local and state governments may be weak financially but potent politically.

In general, the judgment may be ventured that federal agencies aim to use their financial power to obtain desired results; but they have learned to be respectful of the powers and prerogatives of governors, mayors, and county legislators. These officials, representing the established system of state and local government, still have a great deal of political power in their states and communities. Above all, the structure of local governments and the boundaries of political units, despite their manifest weaknesses, have shown great power to perpetuate themselves.

Coordination of Planning and Development Programs

In line with President Johnson's statement about "new groupings and councils of old jurisdictions," Congress has authorized, and several federal agencies have taken the lead in, organizing or stimulating the organization of new territorial units for planning and development purposes. As noted above, these have included the programs of the Economic Development Administration of the Department

of Housing and Urban Development, and various programs of the Department of Agriculture (through the Soil Conservation Service and the Cooperative Extension Service), and the Office of Economic Opportunity.

The Office of Management and Budget has intervened with directives relative to the participation of federal agencies in locally organized planning and development programs. Clearly evident in these regulations is the intent of Congress to make federal grants and loans in effect conditional on planning for areas broader than existing governmental units. Coordination with ongoing programs of local, state, and federal agencies is heavily emphasized. In fact, use of the terms "all viewpoints" and "regional" appears to imply consideration, also, of extra-governmental interests.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has been authorized by the President to prescribe rules and regulations to implement Title IV of the Intergovernmental Coordination Act of 1968. OMB has issued several directives, including Circular No. A-95 (July 24, 1969), which sets guidelines for establishing

a network of State, regional, and metropolitan planning and development clearinghouses which will aid in the coordination of Federal or Federally assisted social, economic, and physical development projects and programs with State, regional, and local planning for orderly growth and development.⁴

The term "regional," in this context, means non-metropolitan and, hence, extends OMB's purview to federally assisted planning in all types of areas.

The clearinghouses serve as the agencies to review applications for federal assistance within their respective areas. They have no

veto power over federal programs. When application is submitted, the clearinghouse acts in an advisory capacity to insure that the proposed program or project is compatible with the planning and development of the area as a whole. While the clearinghouse has no veto power, its comments are often an important factor in the federal agency's decision on an application.⁵

In organizing clearinghouses and determining the boundaries of their respective jurisdictions, the state has a central role. Each governor may designate any multi-county area and recognize any officials in the area as members of the clearinghouse. Similarly, the governor has the option to designate a state clearinghouse.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers one of the federal government's largest grants-in-aid and loan programs; HUD's clients are municipalities, local public agencies, and non-profit corporations. Its basic approach to urban and metropolitan problems is one of planning--city planning, planning of housing, and regional planning. The object of this type of planning it is important to note, is physical - and concerns the characteristics, spatial placement, and inter-relationships of physical facilities such as housing. Planning of this kind obviously has a different emphasis and content than planning for economic development or resource conservation or for the reduction of poverty.

Planning Grants

Under authority of Section 701 of the Housing and Urban Development Act, HUD awards numerous grants just for planning. Hence, it has

served to strengthen substantially the capacity of local governments to engage in planning activities. The following directive of Congress particularly encourages area-wide planning:

Planning assisted under this section shall, to the maximum extent feasible, cover entire areas having common or related development problems. The Secretary shall encourage cooperation in preparing and carrying out plans among all interested municipalities, political subdivisions, public agencies, and other parties in order to achieve coordinated development of entire areas.

When HUD awards grants, or loans funds, for the construction of physical facilities, it expects construction to take place within the framework of an area plan. This requirement has induced local governments in many areas to form inter-governmental associations to review applications for HUD assistance. However, in numerous cases the area plans serve only as vehicles for securing funds and fail to perform the larger planning functions which the legislation intended.

Non-Metropolitan Areas

A 1968 amendment to the Housing and Urban Development Act authorizes extension of HUD grants for comprehensive planning to non-metropolitan areas. To qualify for a grant, the non-metropolitan planning agency must represent a "region" or a "district" comprised of one or more units of general local government. The local planning agency must be designated by the Governor of the State, be acceptable to the Secretary of HUD, and be "empowered under State or local law or interstate compact to perform metropolitan, regional or district planning." Further, the local agency must "to the greatest practicable

extent, be composed of or responsible to the elected officials of the unit or units of general local government for whose jurisdictions they are empowered to engage in planning."⁶

While the non-metropolitan planning area need not be multi-county, HUD declares that "it is extremely difficult for the less populous counties and small jurisdictions to establish and maintain independently the kind of complex organizations needed to deal with the problems facing most communities. Solutions to these problems often require participation of many jurisdictions and cut across county and municipal boundaries within a broad geographic area."⁷ A HUD circular specifies that multi-jurisdictional, non-metropolitan planning districts "must consist of several counties and the principal towns and cities within them, forming a unit that is suitable for planning and development from the standpoint of population size, geographic features, and internal transportation and communication, potential economic viability, and such other factors as state officials believe important."⁸ Such areas must conform to state designated planning areas "unless there is clear justification for not doing so."⁹ The planning agency must be a permanent body with adequate staff and power "to perform district-wide comprehensive planning."

The HUD circular requires that at least two-thirds of the voting membership be "distributed among units of general local government which together represent at least 75 percent of the aggregate population of the District." The remaining voting members should include individuals who can "represent the views of ethnic and racial minorities and low-income groups as well as other community interests in the

District." The reason for this emphasis on local government is stated as follows:

In order to have an effective district planning program, it is essential that the local elected officials who will have the primary responsibility for carrying out the District Agency's recommendations also have direction over the policies and activities of the Agency.¹⁰

Economic Development Areas and Districts

The Economic Development Administration in the U.S. Department of Commerce provides federal assistance for the economic development of financially depressed or seriously troubled areas. Its program was authorized initially by the Area Development Act of 1961 and then continued by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965. A "redevelopment area" is determined by criteria of economic depression: unemployment, population loss, and low income. Usually it is a single county, but it may be a municipality with a population over 250,000. Indian reservations are a special category of redevelopment areas.

The EDA program rests upon three basic assumptions:

1. The population of a depressed area is capable of organizing, planning, and acting to improve the economic conditions of the area.
2. Federal financial aid, for certain purposes, can enable the local people to achieve their development goals.
3. To be most promising of success, the area should have certain demographic characteristics.

According to the first statement, a redevelopment area is not merely a theater for action by national planners. It is assumed that the

people of an area can and should take the initiative to organize, plan, and request federal help to carry out their plans. EDA holds that "outside help will be meaningful only when it is welcomed."¹¹ In accordance with this philosophy, an area seeking EDA assistance must first form a committee or other organized local group and prepare an Overall Economic Development Program. The program, when approved, becomes the basis for federal financial and technical assistance.

Unlike HUD, which works primarily through local governments, EDA asks that the area committee or organization be "representative of the community so that all viewpoints are considered."¹² By "representative," EDA means that the area organization should include persons representing business, labor, minority groups, and other local interests as well as officials of local government in the area. Obviously, EDA is guided by a concept of the community in which local government is only one element.

The differing clienteles of HUD and EDA reflect the fact that HUD is dealing with matters that are largely within the legal competence of local governments (spatial planning, traffic, water, sewers, etc.) whereas economic development requires the cooperation of interested groups and, in reality, is not a subject on which local governments alone can do very much. EDA recognizes the importance of government-citizen cooperation. Area programs are always submitted to local authorities for review before EDA will give its approval. Moreover, the authorizing legislation requires the approval of proposed redevelopment areas or districts by the

Governor of the State.¹³ Thus, it is clear that, although EDA aims to mobilize communities for economic development, the prerogatives of local and state government are respected. However, once an Economic Development District (EDD) has been organized, it maintains direct relationships with the federal EDA and often does not develop systematic liaison with local governments.

The recent extension of HUD's authority into non-metropolitan territory raises the possibility of conflict between HUD's requirements concerning the composition of the area planning agencies and those of EDA, the Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Economic Opportunity which each reserve a much larger role for citizen and interest group participation in the planning process.

EDA's second basic postulate is that, by an appropriate infusion of capital, the volume of productive activity and level of employment in an area can be significantly increased. Federal grants and loans are made: (1) to improve the attractiveness of the area to private business enterprise, (2) to encourage specific enterprises to expand or to enter the area, and (3) to improve the work skills of the labor force.

The Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 recognizes a hierarchy of areas according to size. Some redevelopment areas consist of a single county or municipality. The law requires that every state should be allowed at least one of these. But recognizing that "the economic development of a single redevelopment area may in part depend upon the forces of a larger geographic or economic environment,"¹⁴ the law permits two or more redevelopment areas to

form an "Economic Development District." Beyond this level, the law authorizes larger, interstate "Economic Development Regions." The county is the building block, and invariably, the EDD's are composed of whole counties. The EDA encourages the formation of multi-county districts by, among other things, more generous provision of financial aid.¹⁵

A further important criterion for defining an EDD, akin to central place theory in geography and economics, is that the district must contain a "growth center," defined as "an area or a city of sufficient size and potential to foster the economic growth activities necessary to alleviate the distress of redevelopment areas within the district."¹⁶ In the development theory adopted by the EDA, the process of economic growth pivots on a central city and radiates its effects into the hinterland. In EDA practice, however, the growth center need not be very large. The great majority of the redevelopment areas and EDD's are located in non-metropolitan areas. Up to May 24, 1968, 60 percent of the public works grants had been made to cities of less than 10,000 population, and 80 percent of the business loans to firms located in such cities.¹⁷

Resource Conservation and Development Projects

The Food and Agriculture Act of 1962 authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to assist local sponsors in planning and implementing Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Districts in defined areas. This program is oriented to the conservation, development, and use of natural resources. But since its purpose is "to expand

the economic opportunities for the people of an area . . . ,"¹⁸
 its sphere of activity is broad, including, in addition to resources
 management, the encouragement of industrial development, especially
 of agricultural product processing and marketing agencies, improve-
 ment of public facilities, and training programs to improve the work
 skills of the local population.¹⁹

The RC&D program depends upon an experienced local organizational
 base composed of the more than 3,000 Soil and Water Conservation
 Districts (SWCD) in the United States. These districts are quasi-
 governmental agencies, organized over a long period of years by the
 Soil Conservation Service, but autonomous and deriving their legal
 status and powers from state enabling legislation. All 50 states
 have adopted such legislation. The SWCD elect their own officers.
 They have a history of organized activity and relationships with
 the Department of Agriculture and other federal and state agencies.
 Hence, the RC&D program is a logical extension of former activities.

An RC&D is generally sponsored by one or more existing SWCD's
 in association with other local public agencies, such as municipal
 or county governing bodies. Like the FEA, the Soil Conservation
 Service, which administers the program under the Secretary of
 Agriculture, requires that the sponsoring organization be "broadly
 based and represent the major economic and social segments of the
 people, as well as local governments."²⁰ As with other federally
 sponsored area programs, approval by the Governor of the State is
 required for each proposed RC&D project.

The Soil Conservation Service regards the RC&D projects as genuinely local (or local-area) ventures, to be initiated and carried out by the people of the locality. The federal role is explicitly defined as one of assisting the efforts of the local people. Consequently, when the Soil Conservation Service receives an application for assistance, its first question is: "What are the local people prepared to do?" The SCS prefers to work with larger (multi-county) rather than smaller areas, but the criterion of size is linked to the criterion of local leadership potential:

The area . . . included in the application should be of a size which will permit development of the natural resources resulting in economic improvement and community betterment, but small enough for local leadership to be effective and for a plan to be developed in a reasonable time. (authors' underscore)²¹

Elsewhere in the list of criteria published by the Secretary of Agriculture, requirements for local involvement are outlined:

1. People are aware of opportunities for area improvement through accelerated resource conservation and development.
2. Local leadership and initiative are active and enthusiastic, and receptive to change.
3. Groups, individuals, organizations such as Soil and Water Conservation Districts and other segments of the local economy are willing to become involved in planning for action with a 'do-it-yourself' approach.
4. Local citizen committees are active and functioning in furthering resource development.
5. People are accustomed to working together or show a willingness to organize and sponsor projects.
6. Local citizens are willing to use their own resources including reasonable financial investment to make the project a success.²²

The question of the homogeneity of the area is dealt with by the criterion that the area should have "similar problems, needs, and opportunities for conservation, improvement, development, and utilization of the area's natural resources."²³

Economic and social conditions demand special attention as well:²⁴

1. Need must exist for processing and marketing facilities for utilizing natural resource products to strengthen the local economy.
2. Credit or venture capital for resource development is inadequate.
3. Low income prevails with opportunities for improvement.
4. Substantial underemployment or unemployment in the area.
5. Need exists for industrial and commercial development to provide employment.

These criteria demonstrate that the program, while emphasizing natural resources development, extends, at least in theory, to virtually whatever may be judged necessary to promote the economic development of rural areas.

The reliance of the program on local leadership and decision-making is further manifest in the administrative arrangements. Once a proposal meets the requirements of the Department of Agriculture, the Department assigns a coordinator to the project. The coordinator is a career civil servant, paid by the Soil Conservation Service, whose major duty is to coordinate the activities of the Service (and other Department of Agriculture agencies) with the efforts of the local sponsors. The project coordinator has no administrative power over the local project sponsors. The sponsors are not accountable to the project coordinator nor to the Soil Conservation Service.²⁵ Sponsors are encouraged not to depend entirely on Department of Agriculture funds and technical assistance, but to seek additional funds from local or state sources or from other federal agencies.

The RC&D program has been well received in the rural areas. As of February, 1970, 120 projects had been authorized for operation or planning, and 115 applications were pending approval.²⁶

Community Action Programs

Organized local action, supported by federal funds, is considered one of the principal methods of combating poverty, and was authorized by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Title II of this Act provides for "Community Action Programs" (CAP): communities are to organize themselves and mobilize their resources, with federal help, to improve the condition of the poor. As interpreted by Sergeant Shriver (the first director of the Office of Economic Opportunity) in testimony before Congress, community action is "a program under which an entire city, or neighborhood, or county, or state, enters into a binding agreement to pull itself up by its bootstraps. In effect it means that communities are applying to us for a new type of corporate charter. They are incorporating themselves as a new enterprise, a new business, the business of creating opportunity for the poor."²⁷

Expressed in the law and in Mr. Shriver's interpretation of it is a distinct approach to poverty and of how to combat it. It is a commitment to attack poverty on the community level closely akin to the efforts of the EDA and the Department of Agriculture relative to economic and resource development.

The kinship between community action theory and other federal theories may be partially responsible for failure to foresee some of its major consequences. The "community" which was expected, with

federal help, to generate action through a CAP was something other than the existing system of local and state government, as was the case for EDA and RC&D programs. All three agencies and their respective authorizing laws looked forward to the creation of new local organizations including, but transcending, the existing governmental units. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 defined a very inclusive concept of the community: It could be a state or a political subdivision of a state (town, municipality, county), or a combination of such political subdivisions, or it could be none of these; that is, the "community" could be a private, nonprofit agency.²⁸ With such a broad definition, it could be fairly said that the formation of a community agency eligible to receive federal antipoverty funds was "up for grabs." Most of the CAP's have been coterminous with a municipality. Some encompass several cities, others are countywide, and some are multi-county.

The innovative part of the antipoverty program was the legal requirement that community action agencies must provide for "maximum feasible participation" of the poor.²⁹ It is important to notice in what way this requirement was an innovation; it does not appear to be particularly new. The other federal programs lay great stress on participation by local groups and individuals. The difference is that, while the EDA and the Department of Agriculture appeal for participation by recognized, self-conscious interest groups like farmers, businessmen, or organized workers, there was (in 1964) no self-identified interest group of "the poor."

The "communities" addressed by the EDA and the Department of Agriculture were relatively known quantities. But who would identify themselves as "poor," or who would speak for the "poor," remained to be seen after the approval of the Economic Opportunity Act. Coinciding in time with the height of the civil rights movement, the CAP proved to be a convenient vehicle for the increasingly self-conscious ethnic minority groups, in seeking ways of participating more effectively to realize their own interests. Hence, in the large cities and metropolitan areas, these minority groups--Indians in the West, Negroes in most places and Mexican-Americans in the Southwest--identified themselves as poor" and claimed the right to "maximum feasible participation" in the CAP.

Programs for area economic development were designed so as not to impinge too sharply on the functions of local governments, but the same is not true of antipoverty programs designed under minority group leadership (often with counsel and assistance from non-minority professionals). The projects of the CAP fall more often than not in areas of central concern to local governments, such as schools, housing, health, welfare, and law enforcement.

Relations between the CAP and local governments have often been abrasive. The CAP is not, of course, in a position to create new institutions in these fields, but the federal Office of Economic Opportunity gives them organization and funds with which to press for changes in the established institutions. To many local governments, it has appeared that the federal government was financing not so much a "war against poverty" as a war against them! According to one authority, "maximum feasible participation" should really be

termed "maximum feasible misunderstanding" because it has generated more of a struggle for power between the CAP and the local political-governmental structures than a cooperative attack on poverty.³⁰

Many mayors and county governing bodies took their complaints to Congress and obtained some significant constraints on the anti-poverty CAP. Federal financing was sharply reduced and more controls on local programs were introduced at the Washington level. By amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act in 1966, the composition of the CAP governing boards was specified to give local governments a definite role and to limit representation of the poor. Under the present law, a CAP board must not exceed 51 persons; and its membership must include one-third locally elected or appointed public officials, one-third representatives of major groups and interests in the community (such as business, industry, labor and religious organizations), and one-third representatives of the poor elected by democratic process.³¹

Conflict between the CAP and local government has not been a uniform experience throughout the country. In many rural areas, for example, the CAP has worked harmoniously and effectively with the established authorities.³²

State-Created or Supported Multi-County Areas

While perhaps not as active as the federal government, many states have displayed an inclination to organize new territorial groupings. Like the federal government, states have found it convenient to re-group counties and subdivide states into areas for

administrative purposes. State departments, such as Fish and Game, Agriculture, and Transportation, have formed administrative areas for the promotion of governmental efficiency and effectiveness.

More recently, with assistance of federal grants, many states have placed new emphasis on planning and research. By 1963, for instance, nearly half of all states had received Housing and Urban Development 701 planning grants.³³ Along with financial backing, the federal government has encouraged states to form multi-county "clearinghouses." While many states had previously grouped counties together under a state plan, the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-95 undoubtedly has acted as a further catalyst to encourage delineation of state planning regions.

Most states have utilized county boundaries in delineating planning areas. Aside from this similarity, the purposes and goals of state planning regions are different in most states. While some regions have been used as coordinative mechanisms, others have simply been utilized for collecting and compiling demographic, economic, and other information. Some states have taken these planning regions quite seriously, while other regions exist only on paper.

There are indications that multi-county state planning areas will become increasingly important in the years ahead. In most federal legislation dealing with multi-county areas, there is a legal requirement that the boundaries of the area correspond as closely as possible to previously designated state planning regions. Furthermore, the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-95 has

given state planning areas the power of review and comment over many federal programs. Activation of the new clearinghouse function, federal respect for state planning areas, and the provision of federal monies for planning purposes, should cause state involvement in multi-county planning regions to take on a new and more important dimension.

Perhaps the most innovative approach taken to promote new territorial units has been the creation of areas with specifically delegated legal powers. While perhaps limited in scope and level of activity, these specially state-created areas are granted a degree of authority which transcends the legal powers of local government.

County and city officials do not always look with favor upon regional governments which impinge upon their established areas of power. Nevertheless, it is evident that the threatened destruction of precious natural resources, coupled with the inability or unwillingness of local government to control such destruction, has provoked state officials to create organizations with enlarged geographic jurisdictions. The design of additional such areas will depend heavily upon the ability of local governments to control and regulate the use of natural resources within their jurisdictional bounds.

Councils of Government

Many states have passed legislation to allow county and/or city governments to form voluntary associations or councils of

government (COG). Such legislation is necessary if these associations are to have a legal basis since the state-local relationship is a unitary one--cities and counties derive their power exclusively from state constitutions and legislation. Many states have encouraged the formation of councils of government which coincide with the boundaries of state planning regions.

While these may be organized within counties, in some cases they are multi-county in scope. As noted earlier, in order to qualify for certain kinds of financial assistance, metropolitan and regional clearinghouses must be formed--a powerful impetus to the formation of locally designed councils of government.

The basic assumption underlying this approach is that problems of a regional or area-wide nature can best be handled by local units of government working together. In comparison to other multi-county approaches, the COG is almost always formed by locally elected officials. In only a few cases are non-governmental individuals or groups directly involved in the formation of a local COG.

Unlike the federally sponsored and state-created multi-county areas, the councils of government are usually concerned primarily with inter-governmental cooperation. While CAP's are concerned with poverty and EDD's with economic development, COG's often have a broad range of concerns.

Most basically, however, many councils represent an attempt by local government officials to overcome serious common problems. There is an implicit recognition within each COG of the interdependence of local governments and the utility of working together

to solve mutual problems. Most typically, such councils work together to facilitate more efficient and effective functioning of local government.

There is wide variation in scope and level of activity of COG's. Some are largely informal and county and city officials meet only when a need arises. In other cases, they are highly structured, formal, and persistently active. Many councils act to channel federal funds, receive Housing and Urban Development planning grants to design a regional plan for the multi-county area, and study and coordinate action in such mutual regional problems as transportation, land use, and pollution.

As the name implies, the COG is a federation; any action taken by the council is supported by agreement among all the constituent members. The COG approach can be logically compared with the United Nations Security Council. Each member of the Council has a veto power over the Council's policies and programs; unless unanimous agreement can be reached, no uniform action is taken. Thus, each one of the component units retains its complete sovereignty.

The councils are viewed by some observers as predecessors of regional governments. In several instances there has been some advocacy of the need to create such a fourth layer of government, although as it now operates, the COG is far from an "official" unit of government.

Privately Sponsored Development Organizations

In cooperation with officials of government, private groups and individuals often form development associations. These private groups

are often formed under the auspices of Chambers of Commerce, and indeed, may represent associations of local Chambers of Commerce. The participants are primarily businessmen and the major interest is in attracting or initiating new industries.

Privately sponsored development groups are largely confined to the city, town or perhaps the county level. Private individuals rarely group together to promote planning and development of a multi-county area. Perhaps a major reason for this is the competitive nature of industrial development. Industries, in surveying for suitable location sites, will compare the relative advantages of different areas and pick the most advantageous. In attempting to entice industry, private citizens tend to be narrowly concerned with the development of their own community and attempt to gain a comparative advantage over neighboring communities. Businessmen want business in their own city; officials of government want to augment their local tax base.

Obviously, it takes a strong catalyst to induce individuals to work together on a multi-county level to promote industrial development. Such a catalyst may be provided by a recognition of similar problems which can only be coped with through cooperative endeavors. Individual cities seeking industrial development may be unable to finance studies, develop comprehensive plans, or undertake a sophisticated industrial promotion campaign. By cooperating on a multi-county level, economies of scale may allow private and public bodies to accomplish tasks previously perceived as impossible.

Chapter III

PROCESSES, PROBLEMS AND REQUIREMENTS IN
REGIONAL ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

A wide range of political and administrative issues are raised by the formation of new or unconventional organizational structures. In fact, the severity of these obstacles has limited widespread establishment of new governmental forms even though there is general agreement among political leaders, government officials, and observers that reorganization of local governmental structures is very much in order.

It is the intent of this chapter to examine some of the key features of existing or proposed regional groupings, as a means of highlighting what appear to be theoretically and practically useful approaches. Emphasis is given to the organizational process used, participants in that process, consequences of alternative regional organization, the systems of documentation, evaluation, and public information, and, finally, major problems likely to be encountered.

A Regional Organization Strategy

The organizational strategy proposed in the following pages and outlined in Figure 1 is based on the experience of multi-county organizations in several states, and is grounded in contemporary theories of social action and social change. It assumes the democratic ideal of widespread involvement and representativeness, which has substantial scientific support from studies of community and area action programs.¹ The organizational model takes full

advantage of the leadership resources from existing influence or power structures, but does not necessarily depend on local leaders to provide the major input to area development programs. The goal of the public information and education component of the model is to seek out, involve, train and encourage interested citizens to contribute ideas and energy in the definition of desirable goals, and in implementation of action projects.

Professional staff and consultants are considered crucial to clarification of goals, collection of needed information, feasibility testing, implementation, evaluation, feedback and education. However, the decisions about goals, priorities, organizational policy and implementation activities remain with citizen representatives. Regional development organizations can thus take full advantage of the talents available from temporary consultants--private firms, universities, state or federal agencies, and other sources--while maintaining control of the programs which will directly affect them.

The organization strategy outlined in Figure 1 is not intended to be a definitive "step by step" formula for organizing area planning and development programs. Rather, it attempts to systematize some of the major processes which will usually accompany a successful planning and development effort. Any specific regional organization will need to adapt and supplement the strategy to meet the unique characteristics of the area and population it serves.

The top portion of the model outlines the series of processes or activities usually necessary as part of the organization process; the second level outlines the appropriate participants, in order of

FIGURE 1 - ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL FOR REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PROCESSES OR ACTIVITIES	INITIATION OF ACTIVITY	DECISIONS ON INITIAL GOALS AND ORGANIZATION DESIGN	RESEARCH, INFORMATION COLLECTION, AND ANALYSIS, TO TEST GOAL FEASIBILITY AND VALIDITY OF ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN	LAUNCHING OF THE ORGANIZATION AND PRIORITY SETTING	IDENTIFICATION AND LAUNCHING OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS	REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF INITIAL PROJECTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN	IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS	Innovative Citizens Local Leaders & Officials State & Federal Officials University Extension Staff Temporary Consultants	Elected Local Officials & Representative Citizens from throughout the Area State & Federal Officials University Extension Staff Selected Consultants	University Extension Staff Temporary Consultants State & Federal Officials Elected Local Officials & Representative Citizens	Representative Citizens Elected Local Officials University Extension Staff State & Federal Officials Consultants if needed	Officers & Formal Representatives to the Organization Hired Staff University Staff State & Federal Officials Consultants if needed	Officers & Formal Representatives to the Organization Hired Staff University Staff State & Federal Officials Increased Role for Outside Consultant-Evaluators	Officers & Formal Representatives to the Organization Hired Staff University Staff State & Federal Officials Consultants if needed Broader and more Representative Participation of Citizens, Leaders, & Outsiders
PRODUCTS OR OUTPUTS	Definition of Desirable Goals Initial Organization and Planning Design Commitment to get more Specific	Generally Acceptable Initial Goals Initially Acceptable Organizational Design and Structure Commitment of Local, State & Federal Levels to Invest Time, Energy & Funds	Detailed Data about Physical, Biological, Cultural, Social, Economic, Political & other Characteristics of the Region Delineation of Initially Feasible Goals & Specific Objectives Viable Initial Organizational Design Initial Decisions on Required Funding, Staff, Organizational Officers, Committees & Relationships with State, Federal, University and Other Agencies Commitment to Provide or Secure Support Funds	Election of Organizational Officers Setting & Phasing of Priority Activities Establishing Task Groups or Committees for Each Priority Goal Selection of Needed Staff Preparation of Organizational Budget Clarification of Fund Sources Definition of Relationships with Federal, State and Other Organizations	Specific Projects for Implementation Identification of Human, Physical & Financial Resources Needed for Implementation Assignment of Responsibilities for Activity Initiation of Specific Goal-Directed Activity Allocation of Physical & Financial Resources to Activities Definition of Needed Outside Assistance for Activities	Evaluative Report on Progress & Goal Achievement Review of Organizational Adequacy and Effectiveness Review of Program Caps and Potential New Priorities Selection of New or Adapted Projects Re-allocation of Resources Search for Potentially Needed Additional Resources	More Comprehensive Goals Adapted & More Functional Organization Increasingly Skilled & Competent Officers & Staff Increasing Acceptance, Understanding & Support from Area Citizens Completed Projects which Significantly Improve Human Welfare
DOCUMENTATION, EVALUATION, FEEDBACK, EDUCATION	Initial File of Ideas and Proposals Mass Media Reports of Initial Ideas and Decisions Clarification of What Activities Led to Organization, Planning, and Action	Recorded Set of Initial Goals Description of Initial Organizational Design and Structure Mass Media Reports Public Meetings to Inform Interested Citizens and Receive Suggestions, Criticisms, Observations Clarification of What Activities Led to Goals and Organizational Design	Documentation of Initially Feasible Goals & Specific Objectives Descriptive and Graphic Representation of Selected Organizational Design & Structure Publications Documenting the Process, Participants and Products Mass Media Reports Public Information & Education Meetings for Presentations, Suggestions, Criticisms, Feedback Clarification and Recording of the Process	Recording of all Products Clarification of Processes used to Achieve Products Media Reports Public Meetings for Information, Criticisms, Suggestions, Education Initial Training Programs for Officers, Staff, Task Groups	Recording Clarification of Process Media Reports Public Meetings or Forums for Citizen Input and to Encourage Voluntary Participation Further Training & Education in Problem-Solving & Action Processes	Conduct of Evaluation Activities Preparation of Reports Media Reports Citizen Meetings & Forums Education & Training for New or Adapted Activity	Continued Documentation, Evaluation and Feedback as a Central Task of the Adapted Organization

importance; the third level indicates the products or output that should result from the combination of process and participation; the fourth and lower level (but by no means least significant) notes some of the documentation, evaluation, feedback and educational activities appropriate to each process phase.

Initiation of activity is usually most appropriately undertaken by innovative citizens of the area or local leaders and officials. But quite often in areas where there has been little advance understanding of area development concepts, state and federal officials, university extension staff, or outside (often self-appointed) consultants initiate the activity, by talking to citizen groups or local officials about the possibilities and potential of area development. Regardless of who initiates, the product of these early activities should include definition of some desirable goals, or outcomes, of area planning. The participants should begin to generate ideas about a design for an appropriate organization and planning process. They must develop substantial commitment to the goals and organizational potential if the process is to continue. Documentation should include an initial list or file of proposals for goals and organizational schemes. There should be an effort to inform a wider citizen and leadership public by publicizing the results of the initial discussions. Finally, if the participants are to learn from their experience, and transfer this learning to other groups or areas, a concerted attempt should be undertaken to precisely clarify the events and activities which led to a formal decision to proceed to

a next stage in the process; or if the decision was negative, there should be a documented explanation of reasons for discontinuing the effort.

Decisions on initial goals and organizational design are a next logical phase. Elected local officials from throughout the designated area (assuming at least tentative boundaries have been delineated) and citizens representing a wide array of status levels, incomes, and geographical dispersion should be involved, although formal election of citizen representatives may not yet be either possible or appropriate. The mechanism by which local officials or citizens are selected for participation may be less important here than the degree of their interest, commitment, and potential leadership contribution to the initial goal selection and organizational design. State and federal officials, particularly from planning and development agencies, can often be helpful, as can university extension staff and outside consultants. The degree of consultant participation depends heavily on the knowledge levels and skill of leaders in the region.

The output (or product) should include a list of generally desirable and relevant goals, and an acceptable organizational design and structure. Commitment of officials and citizens to the regional organization strategy should be obtained through an agreement to allocate sufficient human, financial, physical and time resources to assure that the more detailed research, information collection, analysis and feasibility testing of goals and organization design can proceed.

Documentation should obviously include a formal record of the products or achievements.. Mass media reports should be used to inform readers and listeners, but it may also be appropriate at this point to call public meetings in each major community or sub-area to present the results of early discussions and decisions, while seeking suggestions, criticisms, and observations from citizens who might not have been involved so far--but who have significant potential for future input to the process, given a clearly perceived opportunity. It is highly important to maintain a written documentation of the process and specific events or activities leading to initial decisions, including the input from citizens not heretofore involved.

Research, information collection, and analysis, to test goal feasibility and validity of organizational design, is a crucial but often neglected part of the organization process. It is the mechanism for taking full advantage of prior knowledge about area organization and planning, while making full use of scientific and technical tools of examination and analysis. Technical and scientific skills are therefore needed; university staff or private consultants can often be exceedingly helpful at this stage in assisting local leaders to avoid errors based on inadequate information or failure to sufficiently test initial ideas. It is at this point that rigorous analysis can assist the organization process to move forward intelligently and productively. State and federal officials can offer their broader experience with state and federal programs, and can suggest possible financial sources available from higher levels of government. Elected local officials and citizen representatives should be directly

involved, although the bulk of the work might be undertaken by the scientifically and technically trained consultants.

The product of this phase will usually include (1) delineation of feasible general goals and a series of specific objectives to be pursued later, (2) a more viable or functional organizational design adapted to the specific characteristics of the area in question, (3) detailed data about physical, biological, cultural, social, political, economic and other characteristics of the area, (4) initial decisions on required funding, appropriate full-time or part-time staff, organizational officers, committees or task forces, and important relationships with state, federal, university and other agencies from within and outside the area, and (5) a commitment from local or outside sources to provide the funds to initiate formal activities.

Documentation should include a complete record of results of the research, including information collection and analysis, potential goals, and organizational alternatives. Much of these data should be graphically prepared for presentation to public meetings and the mass media. The results of this phase can provide extensive educational content for developing greater understanding about the problems and potential of the area. It can also help the citizen public to appreciate the kind of process and method required to effectively organize to realize area potential. It is often extremely difficult for practical minded local leaders and citizens to understand why research and feasibility testing is important prior to formal action--because they have often had no training in detailed scientific methods, or have had unhappy prior experiences

with studies which seem very expensive and time consuming but do not result in noticeable progress. A thorough effort to increase understanding of the importance of rigorous study and analysis can often pave the way for later support and involvement of larger numbers of citizens.

Launching the Organization and Priority Setting should be the primary province of local citizens and elected officials. This is the point where a formal supra-local organizational structure should begin to emerge publically. If sufficient preliminary work has been completed, the citizens and officials involved should have a clear vision of the positive potential for investing time, money and energy in the creation of a new form of organization to solve problems and realize opportunities which have not heretofore been effectively attacked.

University staff, state and federal officials, and other consultants can often play a facilitating and supporting role, but the test of adequacy will be the effectiveness with which local leaders can begin to carry the burden of launching formal efforts and setting priorities based on prior feasibility tests of desirable goals.

The products should include: (1) elected representatives from local units (towns and counties) of the larger area, (2) elected organizational officers, to constitute a legitimate and acceptable executive action group, (3) a set of priority projects, with recommended time for initiation and completion, (4) establishment of task forces or committees to organize, expedite, and supervise each major project, (5) selection of needed professional staff for the on-going activities

of the organization, (6) preparation of an organizational budget to support the program activity, (7) clarification of specific or potential funding sources, and (8) clear definitions of relationship with other local organizations, state and federal agencies, universities, consultants, and other relevant groups. If these products (or outputs) can be achieved at this phase of organizational development, the process should be well on its way toward significant achievements.

Documentation should continue as noted earlier. More intensive training programs may now be important to help the new organizational representatives, officers, task force members, and professional staff gain additional knowledge about effective organizational functioning, and to improve their capability to assume leadership in the technical tasks required for project achievement.

Identification and launching of specific projects will seem long overdue for most of the participants involved in the preliminary or-
ganizational stages. Some obvious projects, on which most earlier participants have agreed, will often already be in process prior to formalization of the organization. However, some frustration of these earlier efforts may have occurred because of inadequate analysis and preparation.

One of the critical issues in identification of projects is to locate those individuals in the area (within or outside of the formal organizational structure), who have a deep interest and commitment to the specific objectives on which a project is based. Committee or task force members will unquestionably work more diligently and persistently toward the achievement of an end in which they have a

deep and abiding interest. It may not always be possible to locate people who have the requisite personality and leadership characteristics to effectively participate. If so, there may be serious doubt as to the appropriateness of the project.

Professional employees of the organization can play a central role in initiating research and action efforts directed toward project completion, but if the commitment and understanding of local citizens and officials is to be maintained and encouraged, they must be directly involved and should take the initiative in decisions and action. Staff members can most appropriately assume a back-stopping and supporting role--if the long range strength of the area planning and development effort is to be sustained. University staff, state and federal officials, and consultants should serve a supporting research and technical role as defined by officers, task force leaders, or professional staff, although they should also be free to offer suggestions and ideas as they recognize possible errors, omissions, or new possibilities for the organization.

The projects of this phase will usually include: (1) a series of specific projects for further study and action, (2) identification of the human, physical, and financial resources needed to adequately implement each project, (3) assignment of project responsibility to officers, task force members, staff, or other participants, (4) initiation of activity directed toward the achievement of the defined project goals and objectives, (5) allocation of available (or potential) physical and financial resources to projects or tasks, and (6) definitions of need for outside assistance in the form of consultant, educational, financial or other forms of support.

Documentation and evaluation become central in this phase. The project objectives should be written in such a manner that measurement of achievement can be obtained in quantitative or qualitative numerical terms. Professional staff should be responsible for record keeping which will facilitate evaluation and feedback on achievements and problems. If staff members lack evaluation skills, outside consultants might be involved in design and operation of the evaluation process.

It is at this stage that the involvement of citizens can be broadened and strengthened. Many individuals with little appreciation for the early organizational process will become interested in the specific projects which relate directly to prior or newly discovered interests. A systematic effort to inform and involve citizens is therefore of clear importance, and should be a major preoccupation of organizational officers and staff. For those citizens or organization participants who lack technical or organization skills related to project achievement, continuing efforts should be made to provide appropriate education and training. University staff can play a helpful role in teaching the skills of problem-solving and action processes.

Review of initial projects and attempts to achieve greater program comprehensiveness should usually follow the completion of first priority activities. As projects are undertaken, officers, project participants, and consultants from university, state, and federal levels, will recognize inadequacies in organization, inappropriate directions taken by some projects, new possibilities for action, and other observations

of shortcomings or opportunities. At this stage consultant evaluators might play a particularly useful role in helping to add perspective to the observations of individuals more directly involved in the projects.

Products should usually include: (1) evaluative reports on progress of the projects and degree of goal achievement, (2) evaluative reviews of organizational adequacy and effectiveness, (3) reviews of program gaps and potential new priorities, (4) selection of new or adapted projects, (5) re-allocation of resources to new priorities, and (6) a search for additional resources when needed to achieve re-defined goals and priorities. Such products should enable the organization to engage in the kind of self-examination and adaptation process that will enable it to move ahead even more vigorously in the future.

The documentation, evaluation, feedback and educational processes should also be reviewed and adapted if appropriate. The quantity, completeness, and quality of the printed material resulting from the earlier phases should provide some measure of the effectiveness of these processes. Consultant help in evaluating the printed outputs might be appropriate as well.

When this phase is completed (although in a real sense it should become a continuous part of the organizational operation), the leadership and staff will have a firm idea of how the organization should proceed to insure greater program comprehensiveness. If resources and leadership are limited, possibly a decision would be made to avoid attempts at more comprehensive programs, in the interest of

concentrating energy and limited resources on a few projects which have high potential for payoff. Regardless of the outcome of such decisions, mass media reports and educational efforts should be appropriately directed to foster citizen understanding of the new priorities and their underlying rationale.

Implementation of a more comprehensive planning and development effort will usually result if an organization has achieved its initial goals with reasonable success. In this instance, individuals or groups which have not participated so far might become interested or might be recruited by officers or staff. The addition of "new blood" often helps to revitalize even a successful area effort.

Products of a more comprehensive program would usually include: (1) an expanded list of goals which attempts to encompass all of the major problems and opportunities of the area, (2) an adapted and more functional organization with the capability of dealing more comprehensively with existing problems or opportunities, (3) increased skill and competence of organizational participants at all levels, (4) increased understanding, acceptance, and support from citizens in the area, and (5) a series of completed projects which significantly and measureably improve human well being in the area.

If an organization has been particularly successful, formal documentation might include a published case study of the process and effectiveness of the organization. Such studies are the basis for this report, and can serve a most useful function in helping scholars, organization officers, local leaders and interested citizens to better understand planning and development processes.

Problems and Requirements in the Organizational Process

The process as presented in Figure 1 and the preceding paragraphs may seem quite straightforward and readily operationalized. But design and development of an effective new organizational structure is a highly complex and time consuming process. The following sections will examine some of the details and difficulties of the major process phases described above.

Prior Conditions. A first pre-requisite for the initiators of a regional organization is detailed understanding of the conditions of the area, in terms of: (1) human and physical resources, (2) earlier experience with area organizations or development and planning efforts, (3) fundamental or underlying values or belief systems of citizens, and (4) characteristics of existing institutionalized structures or groupings which might overlap with the new organization.² Obviously the research, information collection, and analysis process described above can help to provide this understanding, but initial appreciation of important details can substantially facilitate the selection of goals, early participants, and a realistic organizational design.

If the development of a new and viable organization is to be successful, an effective communication and educational network is one of the necessary (although not sufficient) conditions. If citizens and leaders have limited knowledge of potentially desirable alternatives to their present condition, or are ignorant of their situation as it compares to conditions in other regions, the need for "change" is not likely to be at all apparent. A significant number of citizens

and leaders must feel "relatively deprived", or must recognize serious inadequacies in the biological, physical, political, social or economic condition of their environment before they will perceive change as desirable.

Voluntary associations, composed of individuals who have recognized and become committed to a "cause" of some kind (mental health, alleviation of alcoholism, stopping environmental deterioration, and so on), often serve to highlight relevant issues. But such groups tend to be single purpose, and may have a limited view of highly relevant problems or opportunities which have not yet attracted the attention of advocacy groups. Voluntary associations can exert pressure on existing political systems to respond to unsatisfactory conditions. But it cannot be over-emphasized that without some perception of "relative deprivation", voluntary associations are not usually formed, political units do not automatically respond to pressing societal problems, and regional programs are not developed.

The Focus of Regional Planning and Development. The rationale for multi-county groupings, as opposed to more localized planning areas, should be clearly understood by responsible officials prior to area organization efforts. The initially crucial question is: "Why define a planning region?" The objectives to be accomplished by a multi-county area should be the major criterion in deciding how to delineate area boundaries, and the objectives must, therefore, be responsive to this question. For state administrative purposes, one set of boundaries might be appropriate, whereas for economic development purposes alternative boundaries may make greater sense.

The point is that one must first delineate multi-county planning goals, and boundaries associated with those goals, before attempting coordination or management of activities within the area. Without carefully defined and comprehensible objectives, coordination of activities becomes a highly uncertain and frustrating process.

Many regional planning programs have depended on the development of "essential systems" that, once instituted, provide the stimulus for emergence of more extensive interrelating systems. The task of the planner-organizer is to identify and help improve those "essential systems" (such as efficient local government or progressive educational services) which trigger the formation of succeeding related or dependent systems.

Planning, whether municipal, single-county or regional, has traditionally focused on the physical aspects of the environment-- buildings, streets, highways, physical land forms, and land uses. There is increasing necessity, however, for greater attention to social and ecological planning. Planner-developers have often ignored human desires, values, patterns of living and environmental constraints in their concentration on physical resource development. Indeed, it is widely acknowledged that many of the social and environmental problems presently experienced by society are an outgrowth of planned changes in the physical environment without concomitant attention to their social or ecological impacts.

In recent years we have begun to pay more attention to the critical need for human growth as part of any planning and development scheme. Human resources are distinctly different from natural

resources, and the development strategies we have typically formulated for dealing with natural resources are not often applicable to human resource problems. We have learned to manipulate natural resources. Human resource development, however, is much more than effective "manipulation" of the population. It requires a high commitment to design and development of organizational structures which enable people to grow and develop as individuals and as productive groupings.

Delineating Area Boundaries. It has been unfortunately common in regional planning programs to assume that by increasing the geographic area of concern we have thereby increased available resources. In fact, per capita resources are frequently decreased by defining regional boundaries on the basis of limited criteria. The development rationale which encourages a number of depressed counties with similar economic problems to form a regional organization is a typical example of this phenomenon. They have not expanded their resource capacities nor their ability to deal with serious economic problems, but may simply have compounded the "problem" of insufficient resource availability.

The delineation of area or regional planning boundaries has often relied on the technique of "overlay mapping." Planners using this technique gather a variety of physical, biological, economic and social data, develop overlay maps depicting this information, and then define the multi-county or regional boundaries on the basis of a commonality of area characteristics or problems. This technique has not always been successful because it usually fails to examine the social and political limitations imposed by attitudes, ideologies

and capabilities of citizens in the communities and counties included in the regional organization.

For example, the apparent inability of governments or citizen groups to deal with pressing regional problems or opportunities has resulted in frequent recommendations that county boundaries be dissolved and replaced by new regional boundaries. However, political obstacles make this enterprise essentially impossible in most states. As noted earlier, functional consolidation may be the most viable alternative to abolition of county boundaries.³ Under this form of re-structuring, activities previously performed by single county governments are collaboratively undertaken within the multi-county area. Functional reorganization seems especially well suited to rural counties with declining populations. Depressed rural counties can achieve economies of scale in the provision of services. Functional consolidation also has the advantage of not disrupting citizen loyalties to individual counties. The county boundary continues to exist and the county government continues to operate within those arenas where efficiency can be achieved at a more local level.

It remains apparent that most existing multi-county or regional boundaries have been defined because of common regional characteristics, rather than on the basis of an inter-relationship among major growth factors. There has been a tendency to ignore the degree of inter-relatedness or interdependency among existing community or ecological systems in delineating boundaries. At least the following factors should be considered in delineating area-wide boundaries:

physical, biological, cultural-historical, political, economic and social characteristics of the area.⁴

Major Obstacles to Effective Area Organization. A common obstacle to effective area organization is the tendency of individual communities to regard one another as competitors in the process of economic or social development. Unwillingness to collaborate with other governmental units to improve services or create new enterprises can render each unit less viable and less able to function as an attractive social or economic service center. Each town often attempts to protect its own service units, even though they might be inferior in quality or breadth of service, thus promoting general inferiority and causing many potential clients to go to the larger cities to meet their demands for quality and economy. It seems clear that towns in rural areas must learn to specialize in providing services if they are to remain at all viable. However, local leaders often do not recognize the basis for this apparent trend to desert rural shopping areas, nor the mutual benefits which might be derived from a collaborative endeavor.

The limited perspective of a high proportion of community leaders becomes another major obstacle to effective organization and planning. Major educational efforts are needed to increase the understanding and skills of existing and potential leaders, apart from the educational process that might accompany an area organizational effort.⁵

A related problem, particularly in rural or sparsely settled areas, is the conflict one often finds between, and among, rural

and urban community interests. The area "growth center" (or centers) is frequently regarded as a threat to the development and continued prosperity of the outlying rural communities. In fact, it is perfectly possible for the growth center to continue growing, while leaving the hinterland communities behind. Hinterland communities often perceive this possibility and refuse to join regional planning groups. On the other hand, outlying rural communities frequently join regional planning organizations in desperation--as a means for becoming directly tied, in some way, to the area growth potential evident in the urban center.

The limited legal framework for cooperation between units of local government often presents serious obstacles to collaboration. Unless there are specific state legislative provisions for inter-local cooperation, it is often extremely difficult for local governments to share services, facilities, manpower, funds and planning systems. The legislation to allow greater local flexibility in this respect is in process of adoption, but many constraints remain, for example, in taxation systems, law-making powers of local government, and other numerous limitations on local government.⁶

Another potential obstacle to effective organizational achievement is the occasionally destructive role played by well-intentioned special interest or pressure groups (alluded to above). These groups often attempt to steer an organization toward concentrated attention on "their" problem, to the exclusion of a broader and more comprehensive perspective. If a new organization becomes identified with a particular group or point of view, this will invariably alienate

other groups with either a broader or opposing interest. There is a very fine line between assuming an ideological position on major issues, and attempting to take all points of view into account in the goal setting process. It is at this juncture that the "research, information collection, and analysis" process becomes crucial in testing out goal feasibility in a scientific, systematic, and non-ideological manner. This will help to avoid becoming captive of interest groups, and should help minimize the likelihood of stereotyping the organization or any of its supporters.

A final issue that must be resolved is the "obstacle" arising from attempts to do everything at once, thus diffusing the energy and resources of participants to the point that nothing significant is achieved on any one goal. In the face of declining population, increased dependency of an aging population on fewer employed members, and other changes in rural society, local units of government are pressed to provide a wider range of education, health, and other services. It seems highly unlikely that most local governments or other organizations will be able to finance and support these new service requirements without attaining greater efficiencies in existing governmental functions. A deliberate choice of either, (1) collaboration in securing the needed new services, or (2) general decline in existing services if new services are offered, seems almost inevitable in many rural areas.

Initiation of land-use planning programs is a case in point; if effective physical planning of rural areas is to be undertaken as a means of preventing despoilation or mis-use of rural resources, a

professional staff and substantial financial support must be assigned to planning studies, development of land use regulations, and policing functions. So far federal and state funds have been used to initiate activity in some counties and towns, but the effort must be magnified if adequate protection of the environment is to be sustained. It remains uncertain whether counties are willing to assume the major costs of land use planning, to mount a significant and effective program--if state or federally initiated efforts are not expanded.

The Poverty Issue. Much of the literature on "community" development recognizes the need to deal with pressing problems of poverty in rural areas. Community developers often assume that sufficient human and natural resources exist, but need to be organized and redistributed so that deprived sectors of the population receive an equitable share. Another view, often held by the poor themselves, is that insufficient resources are available. Community action then becomes a process of taking from the "haves" and giving to the "have nots." Many advocates for the poor likewise view community development as a "win-lose" situation in which the poor gain only by taking from the more affluent. The first viewpoint suggests that more innovative institutional mechanisms must be created so that resources and employment can be available to all sectors of the population. Poverty is therefore defined as "under-utilization of current resources and not a result of full-utilization of limited resources."⁷ The major obstacle to developing resources, so that the "poor" receive an equitable share, appears to arise from inadequacies of the existing social, economic, and governmental structure.

The 1970 census data indicate that those individuals having few skills and little wealth have enjoyed rising incomes as our society has become more affluent. Although experiencing greater absolute income, the poor are likewise experiencing greater "relative deprivation". The rural poor, particularly, are at a disadvantage. Their relatively isolated way of life (compared to urban living), inaccessibility to advanced education, and lack of knowledge about the range of occupational opportunities, increases the likelihood that without concerted effort at the local, state and national levels, the poor will continue to be relatively deprived.⁸

Regional planning and development programs involving local, state and national governments may provide an improved mechanism for rural development. Individual local communities, particularly in rural locations, usually do not have adequate competencies to mobilize the resources necessary to mount full-fledged educational and employment programs for low income people without support and assistance from outside.⁹ Access to resources from outside the local community is, therefore, essential if substantial changes in income levels at the local community level are to be achieved.

Measuring Development. Regional organization officials need a mechanism by which to evaluate the degree of program success. One readily available means is to examine existing indicators of change. Statistics generated by the U.S. Census, and other government agencies, will reveal whether the population is declining or growing--an obviously important measure for programs which depend on a minimum population size to achieve economies of scale.

Another common census measure is median family income. The range of incomes, the proportion of the population below the poverty line, and the proportion with very high incomes, are useful statistics.

Levels of education are usually good indices of the general "level" of development, since educational attainment usually correlates strongly with other indicators of progress. Median educational levels are a rough indicator of the general "quality" of the social environment. The proportion of the labor force in the professional, technical, managerial or other skilled occupations are good indices of general development level. There are considerable data indicating that communities having a large proportion of highly skilled professional or technical personnel are relatively "better off" in several respect than communities with a higher proportion of lower status occupations; highly skilled leaders usually come from these groups; incomes are usually higher; and exposure to external knowledge applicable to local issues is usually higher.

The number and type of commercial and service establishments are also useful indices. The less developed areas generally have fewer commercial establishments per capita and a narrower range of available community services.

Area development is likely to take place most readily in those locations having a pre-existing organizational structure through which leadership and other resources can be mobilized. The most direct measures of organizational viability involve an examination of at least the following criteria: "(1) How much increase, (2) in which life changes, (3) of which people, (4) has been produced

by which organization or set of organizations, (5) at what costs, (6) to which people, and (7) in relation to what alternatives?"¹⁰ Each of these criteria can be directly measureable if care is taken in designing information collection instruments and administering them with full attention to social science research methods. If we are to know whether area (regional) development programs are achieving their general goals and specific objectives, making these measurements, analyzing them, and using them to evaluate the effectiveness of the organization and its programs seems essential; yet, sufficient attention to thorough and on-going evaluation remains an elusive enterprise.

Concluding Comments

The intention of this chapter has been to present a general organizational model which has been operational to a significant degree in a number of areas within the United States, and then to define some of the factors which can cause difficulties or problems to any organizational development strategy. The model suggests a series of processes through which organizational development must generally pass if it is to become effective in reaching the goals for which it was created. The desirable participants for each phase of the general process are described, and the products or outputs which should result from adequate attention to process phases and participation are delineated in some detail. The strategy is clearly based on a combination of local, state, federal, and consultant initiative and input. Finally, the strategy model suggests some of

the crucial documentation, evaluation, feedback and educational processes which should accompany each phase of organizational development. Heavy emphasis is placed on public information, participation, and specific educational programs for those in leadership and support positions.

Additional requirements or problems to be considered include:

(1) consideration of helpful, or harmful prior conditions, such as the cultural-historical background of the area, (2) existence of an educational network which can support organizational development and action efforts, and (3) understanding of the potentially helpful, but often destructive role of voluntary organizations already existing in the area. Considerable emphasis is given to the focus or rationale for area development efforts, as compared to alternative strategies of attempting to plan and develop people and other resources.

A discussion of the criteria for delineating area boundaries is included (although it overlaps somewhat with material in Chapters I and II) because this is a crucial part of the initial work in organizing a well-conceived area organization. Some of the central obstacles to effective organization development are presented, but no effort is made to outline all possible obstructions. The issue of how low income people ought to be involved in regional planning and development is discussed, in part because a high proportion of the early regional development efforts were a product of efforts to alleviate poverty.

Finally, the question of measurement of change and evaluation of program effectiveness is emphasized, in part because this is so often ignored until after programs are in operation. Unless measurement is considered at the outset, it is often impossible to establish a baseline and adequate measurement instruments on which to base an evaluation of organizational and program impact.

The following Chapter introduces a series of social and psychological considerations which can be helpful in the total organizational, planning and action procedures. It is an attempt to apply what we have learned from social and psychological research to the practical issues of organizing, planning and working with people in a new organizational setting.

Chapter IV

ORGANIZATION AND ACTION STRATEGIES

If regional planning or development programs are to be effective, the new organizational structures must transcend the power of local governments or county boundaries; that is, the new units must be strong enough to assume decision-making powers appropriate to area-wide goals.

A viable multi-county organization can presumably facilitate more efficient and effective area-wide resource allocation, by providing a mechanism whereby counties and towns can share the cost of funding (or more readily secure outside funds) for those services which cannot be supported by a single community. This clearly implies a separation of regional responsibilities from local municipal responsibilities. Once the area-wide organizational structure is operational, a key function is, therefore, to coordinate area-wide activities with existing local, state and federal agencies. Cooperation with existing government organizations is generally essential to the avoidance of destructive conflicts. Ideally, the local governmental unit retains responsibility for allocation of those services which are economically, politically, or socially feasible at the single community level, while the regional agency assumes responsibility for providing selected services on an area basis. This organizational framework will invariably raise at least two significant questions for local leaders: (1) To what extent

will multi-county development efforts directly benefit single communities? (2) To what extent will single community programs be coordinated with, and supplement multi-county planning efforts?¹

To resolve these questions the formulators of multi-county organization must be vitally concerned with the degree to which the organizational goals reflect local concerns or priorities. This implies that the organization must be structured to ensure continuing representative participation by citizens. In seeking participation, however, some major questions must be raised: How are the representatives chosen? Whom do they represent? To what extent do representatives influence the goal selection process? How do the representatives articulate citizens' goals to the regional officials? Each of these questions relates to the allocation of power within the region. Do the representatives have power to make decisions which direct regional planning and development, or are they simply "token actors", manipulated to fulfill special interest goals? It is not unlikely that professional staff people associated with the regional organization may be encouraged by select segments of the population to "co-opt" token representatives; this "simplifies" the organizational process and makes it easier for the leaders and staff to proceed.

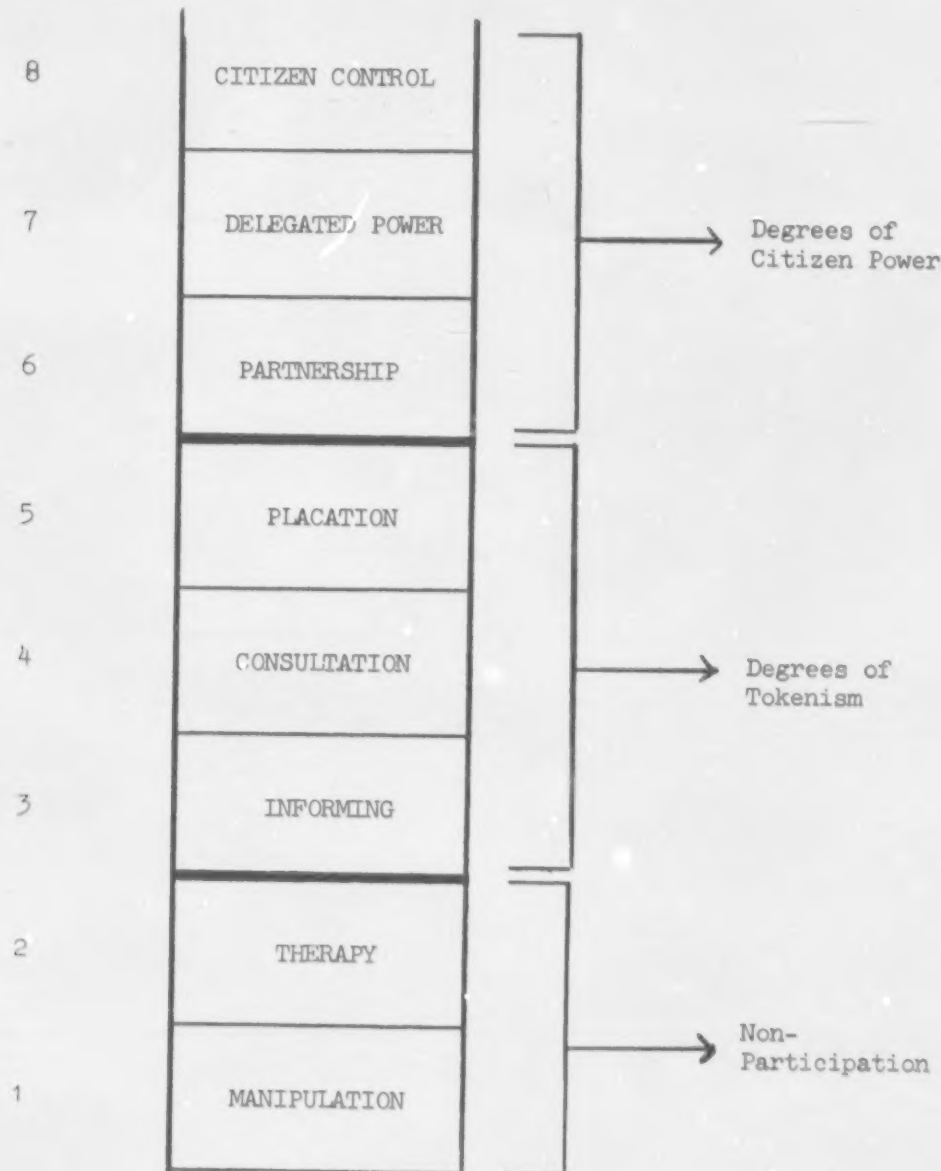
Organizers of area programs must pay careful attention to at least three major citizen involvement requirements: (1) Local involvement in the planning effort should be instituted at the very beginning and facilitated as a part of the larger organizational strategy; (2) citizen representatives should help select goals and then should thoroughly examine their meaning and implications;

(3) public information and educational programs should be designed to clarify program objectives and aid in reconciling them with existing attitudes, values and belief systems; and (4) the professional staff must be cautious not to inadvertantly assume roles already performed by existing institutional or organizational structures, nor should staff assume functions which could readily be undertaken by existing officials or influential.

Degrees of Citizen Participation

Arnstein has developed a model describing the various levels of citizen participation (see Figure 2).² At one end of the continuum she describes two types of citizen participation strategies which, in fact, are simply mechanisms designed to manipulate or to provide "therapy", and in effect, to dilute potential citizen resistance. These types of "participation" obviously do not lead to democratic involvement of citizens. Likewise, three forms of participation are outlined which she calls "tokenism." Citizens are involved only to inform them, consult with them, or placate them. At the upper end of the continuum, citizen participation becomes a "partnership" among citizens and leaders. By delegating specific responsibilities and powers to citizens, or by handing over control of the planning process to citizen participants, leaders operationalize the participative leadership model. Arnstein's typology of citizen participation can be quite helpful to the organizational planner in objectively assessing the degree to which he has incorporated citizens into the planning process. The ladder also implies that

FIGURE 2 - Eight Rungs On The Ladder of Citizen Participation



Taken from Sherry R. Arnstein, "Eight Rungs on the Ladder of Citizen Participation", in Citizen Participation: Effecting Community Change, Edgar S. Cahn and Barry A. Passett, Praeger Publishing: New York, 1971, pp-69-91.

planning programs can be more attentive to the minority and relatively deprived groups in our society, by focusing more deliberately on understanding the social environment in which human beings live. Planning strategies must be designed to improve the social climate and quality of living experienced by deprived segments of the population, which can only be democratically achieved if people feel they have sufficient power to participate in the improvement of their destiny. If existing institutional structures have not developed adequate mechanisms for citizen involvement, then deliberate design of area programs to enhance participation in goal setting and goal achievement would seem crucial in assuring that tokenism or non-participation do not prevail.

Citizen Identification With The New Area

Development of an area-wide "social" system is a necessary precondition for successfully involving local leaders and citizens in a regional or multi-county organization. If the new organization is to be effective over the long run, citizens of the region must identify with the area, as well as with their individual counties or communities. Likewise, the multi-county organizational structure must be accepted and supported by area citizens. An educational effort to support systematic development of "extra-local" community leaders as facilitators for mobilizing the resources of the multi-county area may be a necessary precondition for successful area-wide identification or commitment of citizens. Input from leaders outside the local community may otherwise generate antagonism and rejection.

In most cases the population will already identify to some extent with the "functional economic area" because they use the radio and television stations, transportation facilities, and commercial services available primarily through the major urban centers. The functional economic area can therefore provide a preliminary basis for building a regional social system and organizational structure, providing efforts are made to break down the rural-urban cleavages and the inter-community competition discussed earlier.

Simply because the area is "functional" economically does not in any sense mean that organizational structures necessary for concerted social action have been developed. This problem is succinctly stated by one authority: "To a great extent the emergence of area-wide action programs to carry out development objectives is dependent upon the creation of some area identity among local people and on the formation of area social structures to facilitate social action."³

However, it seems important to stress the significant role local governmental units can continue to play. The responsiveness of local units of government to citizen needs is potentially much greater than regional, state or federal governments. It is therefore important to maintain and strengthen the policy-making and administrative responsibilities which local governments can efficiently perform, while at the same time organizing an area-wide organizational structure responsive to larger (and less local) problems or opportunities. This dual effort may be the best long range mechanism for enlarging and sustaining citizen involvement in public affairs.

Regional planning organizations often vigorously encourage local community development programs as well as the more comprehensive multi-county planning programs. The increasing vertical ties, as discussed earlier, imply however that solutions to apparently "local" problems will often not be found at the local level. It is a principal role of the new regional organizations to distinguish which issues can best be dealt with at the regional level, and which are best handled by local levels of government.

Further Issues in Maximizing Effective Involvement

It is of central importance to systematically identify the key influentials, power figures, opinion leaders and others who will tend to legitimize or condemn new forms of organizational activity. Some of these will hold formal positions in local government or major economic, social or political institutions, while others will be largely "invisible" to the outsider.

It is also important to identify the major organizations through which people in communities and counties work. Some of these will be specialized (such as stockgrowers' associations), while others will be more broadly based (such as community development groups). The purposes, significant activities and leadership of each major organization should be examined and well understood by initiators of new area programs.

Of equal importance (possibly more significant for many purposes) is the identification of individuals and sub-groups within the community who are not involved, or who have been by-passed by existing

avenues for involvement. These often include minority people, older citizens, younger citizens, poorly educated individuals or low income people; likewise, many individuals of presumed higher status are often not involved because no one has demonstrated to them the value of their participation. A very personal approach is usually needed to secure at least representative participation from these groups; numerous experiments have demonstrated that many such individuals will participate if projects can be identified which directly touch their concern. Such efforts require continuous attention, since many of these people lack confidence in their ability to make an effective contribution and need regular encouragement, re-enforcement and clarification of how their participation fits with the total organizational scheme.

It is also of major importance to identify local, state and federal government agencies which might provide inputs to the regional organization process. A wide variety of talent and public resources are available if adequate lines of communication and involvement can be established. Many agencies, or individuals within agencies, prefer to respond to citizen requests for their participation, rather than initiate an agreement to participate.

University and Extension staff can also be valuable resources for many phases of activity (as suggested in Figure 1). Private consultants may be particularly helpful for specialized studies or educational programs.

Possibly the most crucial factor in developing and maintaining effective and efficient involvement is a continuous program of

training, education, and public information. Individuals at all levels of the organizational hierarchy can increase their leadership skills, knowledge, and effectiveness in task accomplishment if they have opportunity to regularly interact with others having similar interests but greater or lesser talent.

Another key point is the encouragement of specialization by all participants in the process, so that each can work on projects of greatest interest to them and which draw on existing special talents. It is the pooling of specialized talent from local, area, university, or college, state and federal levels which seems to have the greatest potential for securing the best balance of human skills which ultimately leads to achievement of goals.

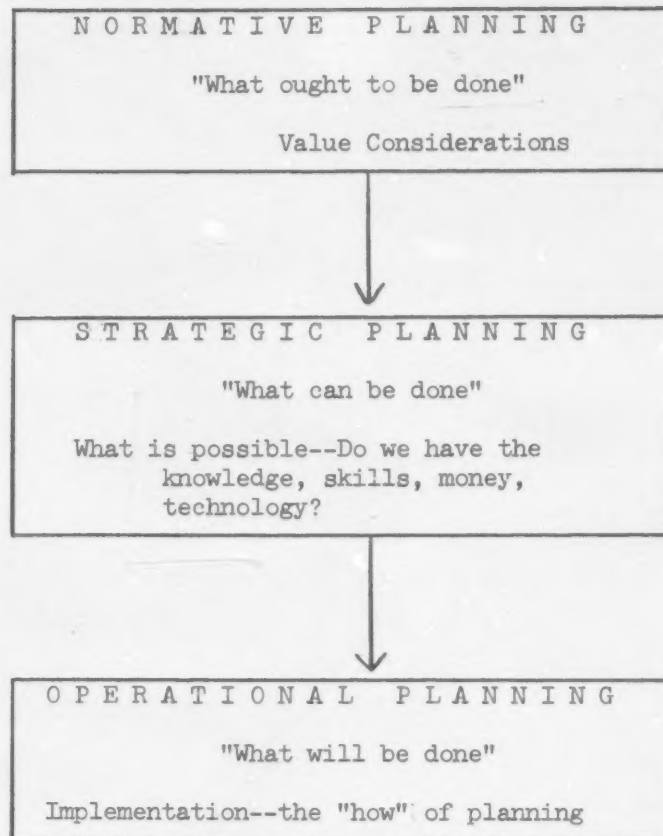
Formal Planning Process

The organizational process (outlined in Figure 1) can be subdivided into three major planning phases as portrayed in Figure 3: (1) normative, (2) strategic, and (3) operational.⁴ The normative phase is associated with the organizational stages which attempt to define clear and measureable planning goals or targets. It attempts to describe "what ought to be done," and is therefore an attempt to articulate desirable values, beliefs, norms and conditions which define the kind of society and environment worth working toward. In some sense it is an expression of what is presently wrong with the area, what ought to be done to correct the imbalances and inadequacies, and what new opportunities might exist toward which the citizens might strive.

Strategic planning attempts to add scientific rigor and pragmatism, based on application of all available information related to the defined goals. This phase refines what "ought to be done," to what "can be done" given the constraints and limitations of human skills, financial resources, and physical resources. Goals are subdivided into a series of specific objectives which stand the tests of feasibility.

Operational planning is focused on "what will be done," given the refined goals arising from the strategic phase. It is concerned with the specific allocation of resources to projects, clear explanation of the necessary action steps, and the design of methods to achieve a functional and effective program.

If normative planning is to be effectively achieved, the citizen involvement processes discussed earlier become crucial. This phase may require a formal method (such as an attitude survey) for eliciting basic public values, beliefs and norms--as well as definitions of what the citizen public recognizes as desirable for the future of the area. Unless great care is taken in securing public input at the normative phase, the strategic and operational phases are in serious danger of being substantially off target. Policies arising from normative planning are too often limited to the deliberations within the bureaucratic structure of government, without the kind of pluralistic input described here; consequently many of the operational plans gather dust rather than providing a blue-print for vigorous action.

FIGURE 3 - Major Planning Phases⁴

Taken from Hasan Ozbekhan, "The Triumph of Technology: 'Can' Implies 'Ought'", in Planning for Diversity and Choice, Stanford Anderson (ed.), M.I.T. Press: Cambridge, 1968, pp. 212-213.

This three phase planning process should provide answers to the following questions: (1) What policy alternatives do the citizens most desire? (2) How much support can be generated to implement the alternatives selected? (3) What potential exists for serious conflict in the implementation of plans? (4) Are there serious value-belief-norm divergencies within the population, or between segments of the population and the professionals responsible for implementation? (5) What educational or information dissemination efforts might be necessary to resolve the conflicts and improve the probability of success in achieving the selected goals? (6) What are the minimum levels of human, financial and physical resources required to assure the achievement of goals?

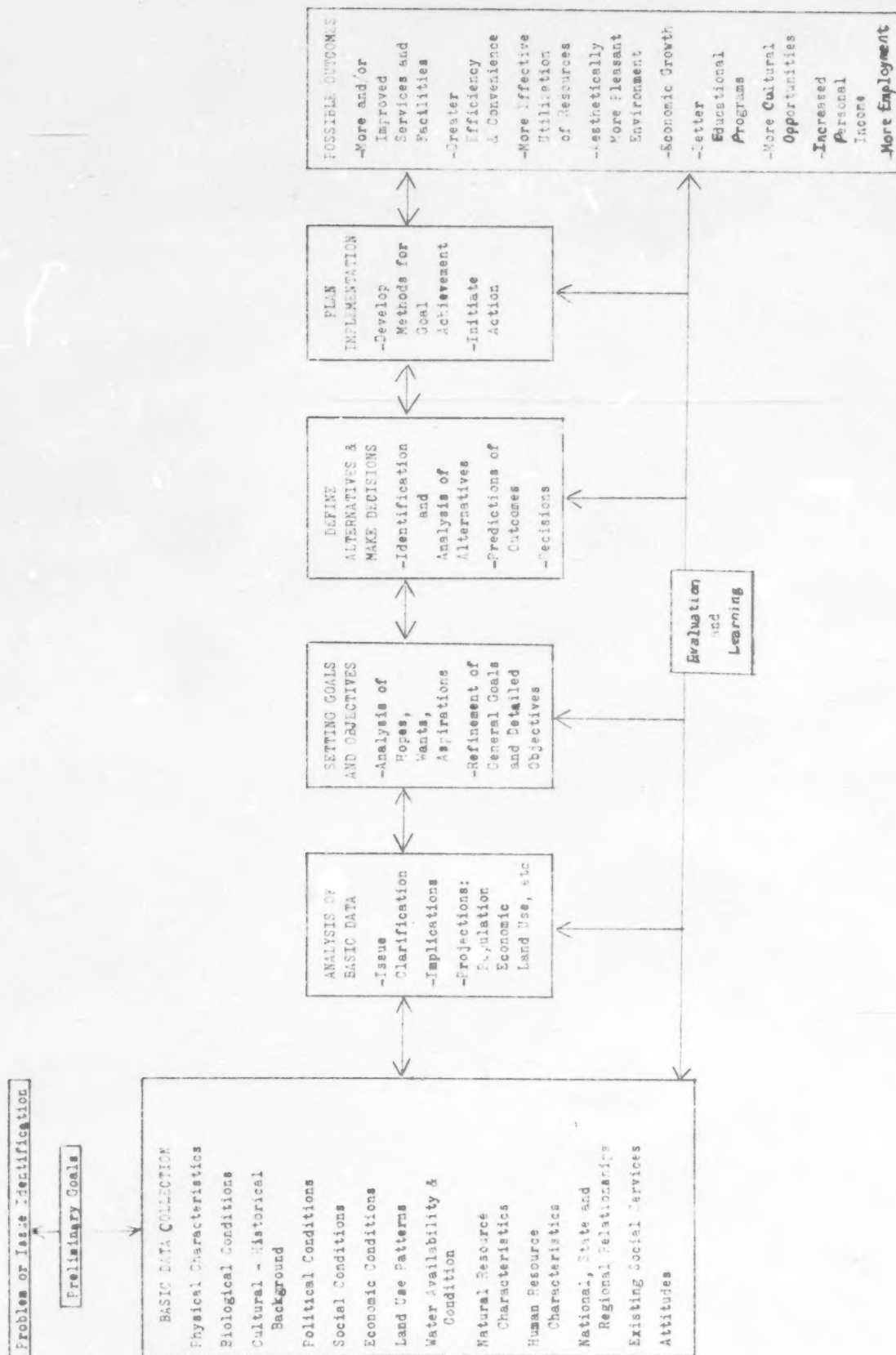
This usually means that professional staff, public officials and citizens must exhibit both intellectual and emotional support for the achievement of the planning process goals; they must each feel a personal stake in successful implementation of the required action steps.

A Planning Process Model

Figure 4 illustrates a more specific planning process model; it overlaps directly with the organization model in Figure 1, but adds several additional dimensions which are crucial details of planning, and represents a summary of a more complex model discussed in detail elsewhere.⁶

This model assumes that an organization for planning and development has been established; the starting point for the planning

FIGURE 4
A PLANNING PROCESS MODEL⁵



component of activity therefore begins with the issues, problems or opportunities, and preliminary goals which have already been identified for the region. For any of the issues in question, basic data must be generated to develop understanding of the issues (problems or opportunities) in question. The list of data types in Figure 4 is intended to be illustrative of the kinds of information which might be needed in an area or region; for any specific issue the information categories might be quite different and certainly more detailed.

The analysis process examines the issue to be sure that it is understood and clearly defined. Implications of the data are explored and projections of possible action consequences are examined, assuming no planned change occurs, and under various assumptions about the future. Thorough understanding of the existing situation surrounding the issue is essential prior to establishing refined goals and methods through which the issue can be resolved.

At the goal refinement stage the hopes, wants, values, and aspirations of the population are balanced against the findings of data analysis, to determine which goals are feasible and could profitably and productively be pursued within financial and other resource constraints. Specific goals, objectives and policies for achieving them can then be established.

Presumably there will be a variety of alternatives by which the specific objectives might be achieved. These alternatives need examination to determine the approaches with highest potential for resolving the issue, within the established constraints. Predictions of potential outcomes under various alternative

approaches can help to clarify the bases for decisions among the options. The elaborateness of this stage of the process will depend heavily on the skill of the staff or leaders involved. Computerized simulation of quantitative data as a basis for projections might be desirable if resources are available to achieve this. But many kinds of issues may not be amenable to this level of analysis, and rational human judgment may be the principal basis for choice.

Once decisions are made, appropriate methods must be selected to implement the decisions. This may involve creation of a new organization, modification of an existing organization to pursue new goals, or simply assigning the new action project to an existing committee or operational program. (The more specific procedures for effective implementation of planned projects are discussed further in later sections).

The outcomes of projects should be directly measurable in so far as possible, and should closely compliment the earlier agreed upon general goals and more specific program objectives. Again, the outcomes listed in Figure 4 are intended only to be illustrative of possibilities. They can represent targets toward which the planning group works, and should enable the program evaluators to specifically determine when the goal outcomes have been reached, or to what degree they have been achieved.

The evaluation and learning component should be on-going, and obviously related directly to the documentation, evaluation, feedback and educational processes outlined in Figure 1. If planning effectiveness is to improve, evaluation and learning are essential--

and well worth the investment of financial resources to assure that this crucial component receives adequate attention. Outside consultants, from private firms, universities or other agencies, can often add substantially to the productivity of evaluation-learning.

The planning process has been treated as a separate component simply to emphasize its relationship to the organizational process described earlier, and to make the process more specific. The more detailed treatment of rural planning referred to in the first paragraph of this section might be useful for readers interested in rural planning and rural development as a broad approach to regional development (Lassey, 1973).

The Action-Planning Concept

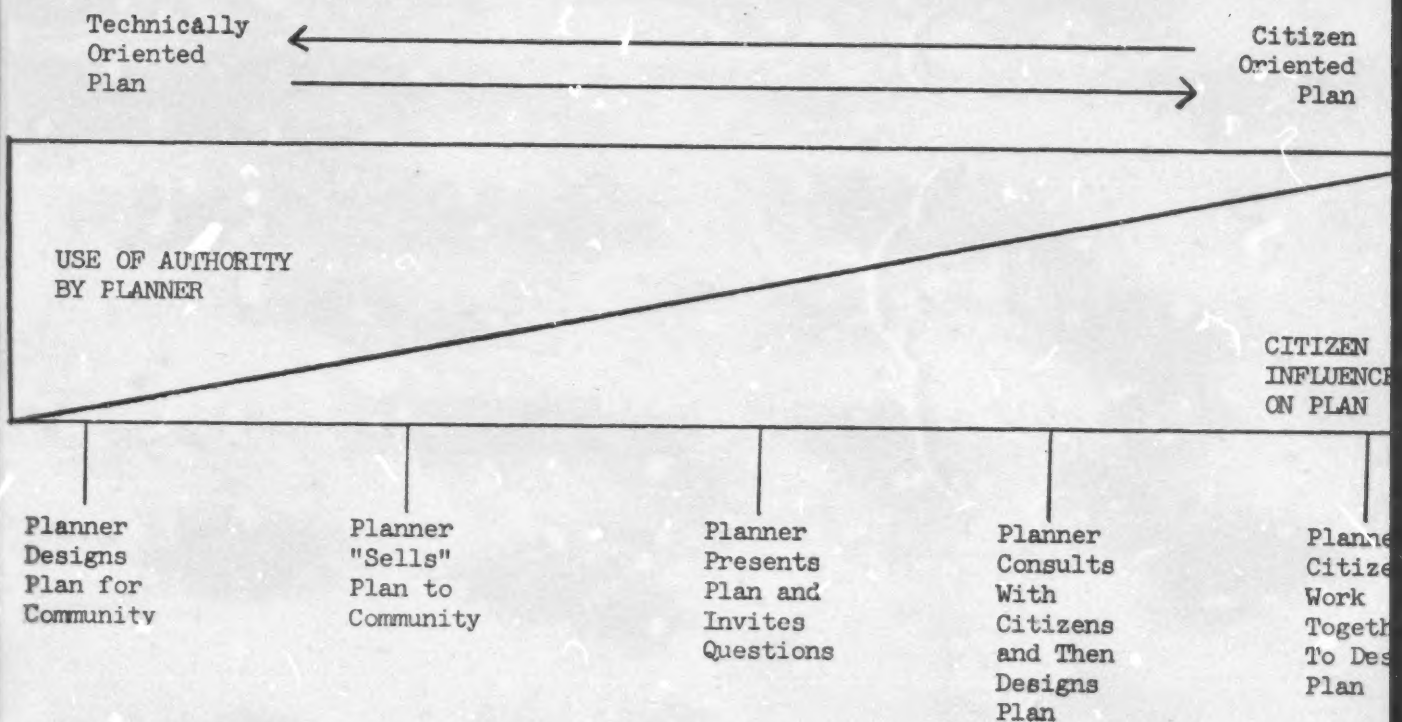
Throughout the preceding pages the importance of a strong link between planning and action has been continually emphasized. Friedman has suggested a label for such a linkage: action-planning.⁷ This conception fuses action and planning into a single process, so that the usual stages (as implied in Figures 1, 3, and 4) are integrated into a cyclical operation that is an integral part of decision-making and management at local, regional, state and national levels. In this sense planning can become the essential "guidance system" for the positive actions of any group or organization, governmental or otherwise. In its most generalized form planning is a pervasive activity. All deliberate action entails (in varying degrees) value and normative considerations in making choices among alternatives. An attempt is usually made, however inadequate or sophisticated, to relate costs to benefits as clearly as possible.

And there is usually some mechanism for corrective measures if actions are perceived as inappropriate, poorly achieved or otherwise fail to some degree.

The action-planning conception radically alters the so-called "traditional" role of the professional "planner". Instead of the technical analyst who provides the background information on which decisions are later made, the action-planner must also become directly involved in managing and directing the total process. To do this successfully he must have not only technical competence in preparing formal plans; he must also have well-developed communication and management skills if he is to successfully relate with political officials, public administrators, citizen influentials and others responsible for research, decision, action and evaluation. He may perform the crucial mediating role between all other participants as defined in Figure 1.

Citizen involvement in the planning process is illustrated in Figure 5, somewhat differently than earlier. If the planning organization uses its full authority to design and implement a plan for an area without citizen involvement, it may develop a technically sophisticated plan which has little potential for successful implementation. Planners or planning organizations regularly design plans for an area, and then attempt to sell the "packages" to the community. Or planners may design tentative plans which they present to citizens and then invite questions or criticisms. Another planning strategy is to consult with citizens prior to design of a plan, and in this way attempt to insure some citizen input into the plan.

FIGURE 5 - Continuum of Planning Participation



Adapted from William R. Lassey, Leadership and Social Change, University Associates Press: Iowa City, Iowa, 1971, p-28.

The action-planning model rejects these strategies and, instead, attempts to provide a mechanism for citizen influence on all phases of planning and action design. Such collaborative "citizen-planner" involvement can result in a citizen-oriented plan acceptable to most segments of the population. The planners must be reminded, however, that this strategy implies giving up decision authority, so that power is "shared" with citizens. A certain degree of risk, and trust in the potential of citizen contributions, is obviously necessary.

A key point in the action-planning approach is not to allow this process to become the exclusive responsibility of a centralized agency; rather, individuals, groups, and organizations of many kinds should be given responsibility and credit for significant roles in all stages of the activity (again, as outlined in Figures 1, 3, and 4). Neither should all participants have to operate under a single set of goals or objectives, nor be "supervised" in any controlled sense. The central role of the responsible planning group or agency is to provide a mechanism for linking the various activities together in a formal coordinating system, to assure that all of the defined objectives are met, gaps in the implementation process are recognized and filled, and the activity overlaps are minimized. This regional linking or coordinating function might best be performed through the organizational structure which results from the processes discussed earlier and summarized in Figure 1.

A key feature of the action-planning approach is continual evaluation of the progress the region is making. The planning group must continually ask: "Have significant interest groups been

neglected? Are all segments of the population represented? Have the relevant influentials or institutional and organizational representatives been contacted and are they continuously involved in the process? Is there enough time to complete the objectives and achieve the goals of the plan? Are counter-campaigns developing against the action-planning process? This last question requires a high level of perceptiveness. If resistance is developing in certain segments of the population this may be an indication that the involvement and educational processes have been inadequate, or fundamental conflicts exist over goals or procedures. If so compensatory action to alleviate these signs of stress may be possible. (Resolution of conflict is discussed in more detail later).

Role of Professional Staff as Advocates

The professional in regional planning and development is presumably a technical expert in the planning process; but he may also serve as an advocate for specific goals in the formation of organizational policy. The action-planner must work closely with special interest groups within the population to articulate their interests in the process of goal setting and plan design. Such "pluralistic" planning will undoubtedly generate value conflicts. To the extent the professional action-planner seriously assumes the advocacy role, he will become involved in clarifying value inconsistencies and conflicts, and helping citizens choose between conflicting value systems. As a facilitator, he must help citizens to rigorously state the values they wish satisfied, and assist in resolving

existing value conflicts. In the process of advocating for special interest groups, he may enter into conflict with existing public agencies. He must recognize this possibility, and often be willing to articulate the demands of special interest groups in the face of conflicting public policy. As a change agent, the action-planner must often be willing to act as critic of existing institutional structures if these structures do not adequately respond to citizen needs.

Single-Purpose and Comprehensive Planning

The planning organization must attempt to comprehensively identify the needs of the region, and develop action-plans responsive to these needs. But, implementation of plans will obviously take place incrementally. Strategic planning presupposes that a single regional problem has been outlined and an action-plan formulated to solve this problem. Essentially this means that some needs must remain unmet for a period of time, and in fact some problems may not be resolved, given existing resources. Comprehensive plans serve as a guideline incorporating specific single-purpose action programs. In the strict sense of the term, "comprehensive" plans are never completed since the planning process is ongoing; comprehensive plans must be continually updated and changed, while "project" plans can be specialized or tailor-made to solve identified problems. Comprehensive plans are implemented segmentally by delimiting action to single problem or opportunity arenas during a particular time span, but with the larger and more comprehensive situation in full

view. Resources, the talents and expertise of the planners, and the ability of the citizens to participate, are all limited; attempting many segments of the "plan" simultaneously may strain these limited resources beyond their capabilities, thus leading toward failure to achieve intended results.

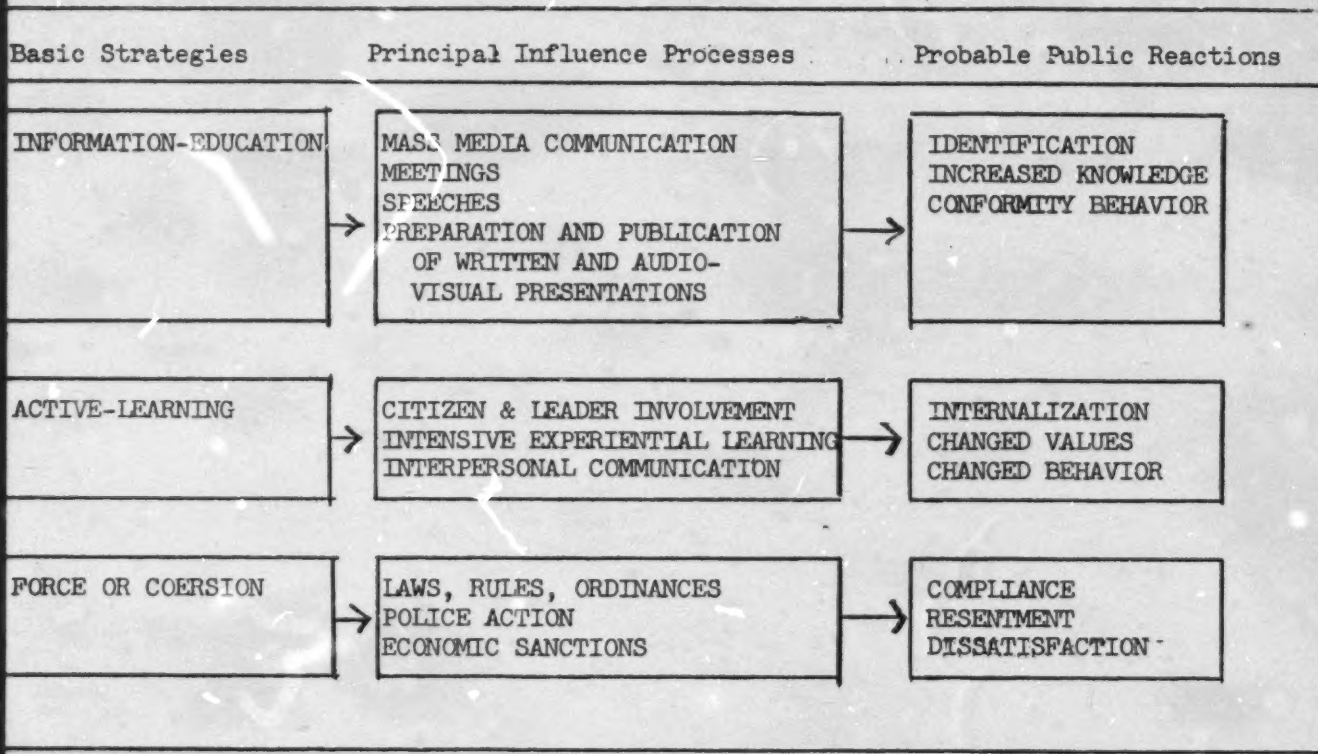
Implementation of a comprehensive plan on a segmental basis assumes a conceptual framework which recognizes the important linkages between the special segments and the comprehensive plan.

The goals of single-purpose action plans are usually short-run and limited in scope. Unless these important linkages are recognized, one runs the risk of implementing a series of unrelated single purpose plans which, in the long run, do not contribute to significant regional development.

Change Strategies

Figure 6 illustrates three change strategies, likely reactions of persons subjected to each, and the kinds of influence processes logically used to implement each kind of strategy. The three basic strategies are neither exhaustive of all possibilities nor necessarily mutually exclusive; that is, there are other strategies for achieving change which are not discussed here, and the strategies suggested are often mixed--to include more than one approach. The important point is that each strategy implies a distinct set of assumptions about reactions to influence, and will usually use a consistent approach to influencing public behavior.

FIGURE 6 - Change Strategies, Influence Processes and Public Reactions



Adapted from Herbert C. Kelman "The Processes of Opinion Change," in Bennis, Berne and
 Chin, The Planning of Change, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969, p-223,
 and Chin and Berne, "General Strategies for Effecting Change in Human Systems,"
 same volume, pp-32-57.

The information-education strategy assumes that provision of information to people, or involving them in opportunities to learn systematically, will be sufficient to create understanding and acceptance of planning concepts and proposals. This approach has been labeled "empirical-rational" by other authors, because it assumes that if empirical data or information are supplied to people, they will respond rationally to it--and modify their behavior accordingly.⁸ The usual mode of influence will include publication of the information in printed form, or presentations on the broadcasting media, or lectures in classes or meetings, and other forms of presentation to the target groups or individuals. This will ordinarily result in an ability of selected members of the public who are already interested in the issues in question to increase their knowledge, possibly identify with the new ideas or proposals encountered, and attitudinally conform to the new information. However, they are not likely to have "experienced" the new knowledge or information in such a way as to be profoundly affected; their behavior is not likely to change very radically, if at all.

The active-learning strategy makes quite different assumptions. It is presumed that the goal of information and education is to affect behavior directly. If people are to be affected directly they must be involved at first hand in experiencing the new knowledge and information, by assimilating its effects, or directly feeling its effects in a controlled environment. This approach has been labeled "normative re-educative" by other authors because it attempts to directly affect the existing norms through re-examining existing

knowledge in contrast with new knowledge. This implies that some existing "knowledge" and "behavior" may in fact be obsolete and need replacement. Behavior based on obsolete knowledge will be changed if individuals and groups can test out directly the utility of the new knowledge and its behavioral consequences.

The influence processes must therefore be much more intensive, and in some sense require greater risk, or even threat, to existing life patterns. Involving citizens and leaders in the on-going processes of planning, or in new attempts to plan, can have a profound effect on understanding and behavior, if the participation is at the fully involving levels of the "citizen participation ladder" (see Figure 2). Educational efforts are likely to involve much more than mass media presentations, lectures or reading. Learning laboratories might be organized to provide an intensive several hours (days, or weeks) "experience" with the new knowledge--to simulate direct involvement, thoroughly discuss its implications with others equally interested, and generally to experience the consequences of the potential change. The educational process becomes highly personal and interpersonal, because it directly involves other people with whom a joint commitment is developed. The results of such learning are likely to include internalization of the knowledge so that it becomes part of individuals' perceptions and affects their attitudes, beliefs and values; private or public behavior is likely to noticeably change in directions that are not always entirely predictable. The consequences of the active-learning

strategy are therefore likely to be much more significant for the individuals involved, and for the planning program, than the "information-education" approach, because basic behavior is affected rather than only knowledge level and attitudes.

The force-coersion strategy assumes a situation in which individuals in positions of authority or high status know better what is good for citizens in a planning region than do the citizens themselves. It assumes that change is imposed by directive, based on superior, "official" knowledge of what "ought to be." It is basically an authoritarian approach involving well defined rules, laws, or other regulations, which are controlled by some form of police power or economic sanctions (such as fines, jail sentences, loss of position, or other drastic measures). It may take the view that individuals are not generally to be trusted, and do not have the ability to judge for themselves how to use and evaluate existing or new knowledge.

The public reaction to this approach may be compliance, at least by most citizens, but resentment and dissatisfaction may be generated sufficiently that efforts are made to subvert the rules and laws at every opportunity when sanctions are not an immediate threat, or in spite of the sanctions. Hostility is often generated, leading to low morale and minimal support for the planning goals--even though the persons affected may agree with the need for planning and even with the defined goals. They may tend to react against imposition of implementation methods which they consider antagonistic to their individual freedom and autonomy.

Many planning efforts attempt to combine the "information-education" and "force-coersion" strategies--assuming that once people are informed they will accept the dictates of an authoritarian implementation process. The evidence of success in such an approach is clear to a certain degree, since this has been the only mechanism used in many communities which have adopted formal planning procedures. However, active citizen participation is often minimal, and most of the formal work and decisions are undertaken by elected or appointed public officials. The effects are sometimes well received, but more often "plans" collect dust because citizens do not sufficiently understand nor develop the commitment to support the proposals.

The "active-learning" strategy is clearly the most desirable approach in circumstances where adequate professional leadership is available, and where citizen leaders understand and support the strategy. However, it is likely to be the most time-consuming, expensive (in the short run), and will generate greater immediately visible debate, conflict and public notice. It may be highly threatening to individuals with a commitment to the status quo, who like to talk about change as long as it does not affect their interests directly. To attempt this kind of intensive and long term approach without skilled professionals and committed local leaders in charge of designing and supporting the process would likely be frustrating and possibly unsuccessful; it is not a strategy to be adopted unless real change is intended.

Regardless of which change strategy (or combination of strategies) is selected, there is likely to be considerable resistance to

significant alterations in the status quo. The following section analyzes the characteristics of resistance and suggests some of the methods which might be used to deal positively with it; resistance can be a valuable and instructive enterprise if it is perceived as part of the mechanism by which improvements can be made in decisions which affect the planning process.

Resistance to Change

Goodwin Watson has provided a framework to illustrate the typical cycle of "resistance to change" which occurs whenever new innovations are proposed (see Figure 7).⁹ During Stage I, a few innovators or "pioneer" thinkers may propose a new strategy for using regional resources. The majority of the population, however, regard this proposed innovation as unrealistic, but do not actively support (or immediately resist) the proposed change. The proponents of change continue contacting, informing and consulting segments of the population, and begin to establish some support. At the same time, counter-campaigns may be launched to preserve the status-quo (Stage II). During Stage III, direct conflict occurs between the proponents and opponents of the proposed change. At this point in the cycle, the proposal will be defeated, or it will generate enough support to move on to Stage IV. During this stage, supporters of the proposed change gain sufficient power to establish their programs. However some continuing resistance remains, although not sufficient to interfere with the change program. Stages I through IV illustrate the "resistance to change" cycle typical of

FIGURE 7 - Stages in Resistance to Change

STAGE I	STAGE II	STAGE III	STAGE IV	STAGE V
Few "Pioneer" Thinkers	Movement for Change has Begun to Grow	Direct Conflict Between Pro and Con Groups Appear	Supporters for Change Are in Power	New "Pioneer" Thinkers
Everyone Knows "Better"	Groups Against Change Begin to Form	Life or Death Point for Proposed Change	Some Continuing Resistance	Change is Accepted -- But -- New "Pioneer" Thinkers View Former Innovators As Change Resisters

Adapted from Goodwin Watson, "Resistance to Change", in The Planning of Change, Warren G. Bennis, Kenneth D. Benne, and Robert Chin (ed.), Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.: New York, 1969, pp. 488-489.

most social action efforts. A new point of equilibrium is reached and remains until sufficient stress is exerted, forcing the system to again consider additional innovations.

In attempting to implement planned change programs, the planning group will be less disturbed by evidence of resistance and conflict if they understand its positive value as a potential error correcting mechanism. On the other hand, resistance will be less if community leaders feel the project is their own, or is one they have had a part in designing. Resistance will likewise diminish if the top influentials in the social system have been contacted, understand the proposed change and the reasons for it, and have committed their support to it. If the top influentials regard the proposed change as one which will help reduce their responsibilities rather than cause additional problems for them, they will be more committed to supporting it. Resistance will likewise be less if citizens recognize that proposed changes support existing values and beliefs.¹⁰

Living With Conflict

In conflict situations involving competing value choices, the outcomes can be constructive or destructive for the social climate of the community, and will have significant implications for the feasibility of future development programs. Social conflict is most destructive when the participants assume a "win-lose" posture. Under these conditions, a power strategy for social change is bound to emerge, involving competition among special interest groups. Once a competitive climate is established, the opposing parties slowly,

and often unwittingly, become committed to conflicting proposals, and a gradual, mutual alienation occurs. Once a destructive conflict climate has been created, the potential for future collaborative efforts becomes problematic. The change agent should, therefore, attempt to develop a climate in which productive conflict is possible; such a climate is enhanced when conflict is controlled by establishing norms or rules of behavior.¹¹

To control potential conflict situations, rules of behavior must be established which: (1) are known to all participants, (2) appear to be relatively unbiased and (3) remain consistent throughout the planning process. Both sides involved in the conflict must also agree to abide by these rules; unless such agreement is obtained, the rules are obviously worthless. Indeed, it is essential that the rules be designed so that violations are easily observed, and disapproval on the part of both parties can be expressed. Such rules are most easily established if uncontrolled conflict has occurred in the past and has been perceived as highly costly to the community. Under such controlled conditions productive conflict becomes possible.

The planning group must attempt to establish a "win-win" climate in which competing parties recognize that their differences can be satisfactorily worked out. Controlled conflict implies a collaborative strategy in which the participants search for those goals and methods which unite them, and have faith in their ability to resolve their differences. Collaboration implies dealing straight-forwardly with the differences which divide the participants,

and developing a mechanism for facilitating continual communication to develop and enhance trust between the groups. It is important that, when conditions of conflict occur, the planning group identify and express those values and beliefs which the competitors do have in common. By building on these shared values, a climate may be created in which value differences can be worked out and compromise achieved. Productive conflict strategies are useful however, only when goals are "distributable"; that is, only when both sides to the conflict can achieve some of their goals without compromising basic values or beliefs.

Social conflict occurs when some segments of the population regard the costs of implementing changes as far in excess of the benefits. The planning group must closely examine the social costs and benefits during the research and analysis phase and objectively evaluate: (1) which groups will benefit, by how much and at what costs, and (2) which groups will lose, by how much and at what costs. If the total costs appear to far outweigh the benefits, the project might be considered a "bad" project and dropped immediately. This is particularly true in planning development programs for those areas in which human and natural resources are scarce. Poor areas can take fewer risks on development programs that may not pay off. A major deficiency in planning knowledge is the lack of an objective "social calculus" to outline a true sense of the full costs and benefits of planning proposals. We must therefore be resigned, at least for the present, to struggling with value conflicts which are the product of differential assessment of the costs and benefits of planned change programs.

Chapter V

REGIONAL MULTI-COUNTY AREAS AS A TOOL FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Multi-county areas have become a highly visible alternative to existing organizational schemes for achieving certain planning and development goals. The basis for their emergence is largely a consequence of the widening gap between the demands made upon government and its ability to respond. Local government has not had the geographic breadth, legal power, or financial capability to deal with area-wide problems. State government has found it difficult to deal with the multiplicity of local jurisdictions originated for purposes of planning, administration, and economic or social development. Federal government lacks the local support or proximity to adapt national programs and priorities to the needs of sub-state areas. The inefficiencies and duplication at each level of government have greatly diluted the effectiveness of many well-meaning public efforts. Local officials and citizens have often been immensely frustrated by the inability of any single governmental jurisdiction to solve problems or effectively influence existing or new state and federal programs.

Regional organization within, and among, states has in part met the need for more effective mechanisms to coordinate horizontal integration among local units of government, and vertical integration among layers of government at the area, state and national levels. But the potential capabilities of new organizational forms are yet to be fully realized in most parts of the United States.

Multi-county, area, or regional districting has been used primarily as a vehicle for collaboration among counties and municipalities on common problems and opportunities without creating a new layer of government. The new regions have provided a general framework for comprehensive approaches to planning and development. They also provide an administrative channel to state and federal agencies for more efficient delivery and coordination of state and federal services.

A common theme among all the area organizations so far established is the concept of using a geographical area as a frame for re-organizing diverse development activities into a systematic area-wide program. A second characteristic premise is that the territorial area is a social unit within which problems and needs can be identified, programs formulated, leadership developed, and citizen support mobilized.

Federal agencies have developed various prescriptions for representation on the governing boards of government supported area organizations. The agencies have had little to say, however, about criteria for determining the size, boundaries, or other area organization characteristics. Such decisions are generally left to local initiative and negotiation on an ad hoc basis. In promoting new forms of territorial organization which contain an inherent threat to existing structures, the federal government has usually displayed considerable respect for the integrity and prerogatives of state and local governments. It is a long-standing federal policy to respect the boundaries of existing local government territories.

With few exceptions, federally sponsored area organizations include whole counties or, in some cases, a single large county.

From the federal point of view, the multi-county organizations are an innovative mechanism for federal-state-local cooperation in implementing national policies. On the other hand, such cooperative arrangements raise profound questions about division of power between the new structures and the old. Local governments, while urgently needing federal money, have striven to minimize the inroads of new organizations on their traditional authority.

The most popular form of multi-county organization nationally is the "association of local governments" (variously entitled "federations" or "councils"), in which each local government unit enters as an equal member and the governing board consists wholly of local, elected officials. These associations have mainly consultative and advisory functions and sometimes legal capacity for joint exercise of governmental powers. The member governments usually resist any movement toward organization of a regional government.

In its most ideal form, therefore, the multi-county unit does provide a basis for effective partnership between local, state and federal efforts. The regional unit can be a more viable mechanism for inter-relating rural and urban concerns, for organizing, financing, and supporting a professional planning and development staff, and for more efficient implementation of federal and state initiated area-wide economic and social programs.

Having noted these possibilities for use of multi-county areas, it is obvious they are not a panacea for the resolution of all governmental problems; rather, they are a tool that will only be useful if designed and used with careful attention to their limited purposes. It may be appropriate to conclude that area organizations should attempt to fill the gaps that exist in the efficiencies and effectiveness of existing jurisdictions, but should not necessarily attempt to replace existing governmental structures except in extreme instances when such structures are clearly no longer viable.

Local representative government should be preserved rather than diluted; however, pooling of some presently inefficient local governmental functions could serve to strengthen representativeness--by allowing elected officials more time and resources to deal with the larger problems of planning and development rather than supervising overlapping and inefficient services.

Careful attention should be given to each of the major factors noted in Chapter I. Ecology of the area, or inter-dependence of the human population and the natural environment, is an increasingly relevant factor for planning, economic growth, resource utilization, and for provision of social and cultural amenities. Geographic factors such as nodal points, transportation linkages and natural resources, and homogeneity of population, and other area features can be empirically studied and incorporated as factors to be considered in the delineation of area boundaries.

Social organizations and institutions in many communities have been deteriorating or have become obsolete; new institutional

structures may have greater potential to fulfill human needs efficiently and completely. For example, services to the increasingly large population of the retired and aged might be provided much more effectively through area organizational structures than by the traditional single town or county organizational unit. Costly medical services are already centralized in the larger urban centers, while small rural hospitals are having an extremely difficult time financially, and are finding it largely impossible to provide comprehensive medical facilities. Area organizational structures might provide a mechanism for a wide range of other kinds of integration at the horizontal level among towns and counties, and at the vertical level among local and higher levels of government.

The concept of "functional economic area" is relevant to area boundary delineation, particularly in states where there are a limited number of full-service shopping and marketing centers. If newly defined areas are to be economically functional, they must include locations where the population seeks services and where the major economic functions such as wholesaling, distributing, financing, and manufacturing are taking place. Economic sub-regions have been defined for many states and can be extremely helpful in rational definition of planning and development areas.

Although the multi-county areas, as discussed here, are not intended to be "political" jurisdictions, they will undoubtedly have certain political impacts. If area-wide boundaries are delineated there is likely to be a tendency for those boundaries to affect political participation and decision-making; elected

officials from such an area are likely to identify with those boundaries in making decisions with respect to funding and distribution of services. If area organizational units are to be effective they must be allowed certain legal powers which obviously will be channeled through the political process. One criterion of boundary delineation should therefore be a sufficient heterogeneity of citizen interests to encourage effective debate on important issues, particularly if the organizational unit is to contribute to innovative problem solutions (the lack of which has contributed to ineffectiveness of many local governments).

The administrative requirements of state and federal agencies are a primary factor in delineation of within-state area boundaries, but adequate account must also be given to inter-relationships among agencies and units of government. It may be advisable for agencies with related functions to locate area offices in the same cities and utilize similar boundary lines, particularly when these agencies must work closely with local government. Federal government agencies have tended to become highly specialized; which may be desirable for efficient provision of single services, but can be destructive to public well-being if adequate coordination with other agencies is not maintained; a primary purpose of area delineation should clearly and persistently be area-wide coordination.

If such coordination is to be achieved a carefully designed organizational structure is needed to serve as the mechanism for identifying key opportunities for collaboration, or persistent problems which can best be resolved on a regional basis. The

organizational development model outlined in Chapter III attempts to identify the process phases, important participants, products or outputs, documentation, evaluation, and educational components, which can contribute to effective organization. The processes dwell heavily on careful goal selection, feasibility testing of goals, organizational design to optimize representativeness, selection of skilled supporting staff, broadly representative citizen participation, task force design and management of projects, careful review of project and organizational effectiveness, and evaluation of program comprehensiveness.

There are a variety of tested methods and techniques for facilitating the work of an organization. Chapter IV is devoted to brief descriptions of these methods, with emphasis on how they might be adapted for use at the regional level. A series of graphic models are presented to suggest dimensions and requirements for citizen participation, formal planning processes and procedures, action-planning as an important concept for integrating planning and action as an on-going cyclical process, roles for professional staff, basic strategies for educational involvement of leaders and citizens, the role of resistance to change in program improvement, and the role of conflict as a energizing and potentially productive means for involvement.

The methods and techniques are by no means comprehensive in the sense that all possible knowledge about such processes are included. Rather, the description of useful approaches to goal achievement is intended to inform participants in regional planning

and development programs about some of the tools available; many other approaches are described in literature referred to in the list of references, and a bibliography of additional materials is attached in the appendix.

For those interested in some concrete examples of regional planning and development efforts, a summary of programs in nine other states is available in separate form.¹

If all of the factors outlined in the preceding paragraphs, and in earlier parts of this document, are taken adequately into account, the complexity of multi-county area formation becomes clear. This is not an enterprise that should be undertaken without thorough study and public debate. Citizen involvement in widespread discussion with local, state and federal officials can serve to increase understanding and facilitate eventual implementation of area-wide programs. With adequate understanding, area or multi-county organization can be a useful tool for helping to realize the social, economic, political and environmental values central to a democratic society.

FOOTNOTES

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